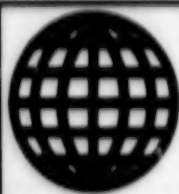


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**FOREIGN
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JPRS Report

Soviet Union

Political Affairs

**USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS & OFFICIALS:
BIOGRAPHIES, INTERVIEWS**

Soviet Union

Political Affairs

USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OFFICIALS: BIOGRAPHIES, INTERVIEWS

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Introductory Commentary

[Text] A government of a new composition has been formed on the whole and has started its work.

Millions of Soviet people witnessed and directly participated in the process of confirmation of candidates to the positions in supreme state organs. It was probably the first time in our history that the process rested on a firm democratic foundation and proceeded in an atmosphere of openness and broad glasnost. The candidates faced heavy odds. There were dozens of questions, sharp criticism of their programs and an exchange of opinion without face-saving.

The head of the government addressed the People's Deputies more than 700 times to explain his position and to answer questions. The members of the future cabinet also gave a full account of their past activities and their plans.

What did the discussion bring to light?

The spotlight was put on the ability to take resolute steps, take care of the working people's interests, show novel approaches to solve the problems faced by respective industries and management structures. The deputies took particular interest in the ways to deal with social and ecological problems, working people's material living conditions, attitude to the economic reforms and the practical steps to implement it. And besides whether a candidate can transcend departmental interests and evaluate the achieved results from the position of a statesman and a public figure...

It should be mentioned outright that those candidates who referred to the traditional, volume indices cut a very poor image against the backdrop of such high demands, when they invoked the percentages of plan fulfillment, objective reasons to explain away shortcomings and failures and demanded additional materials and resources... In instances when such outdated categories prevailed, the deputies made a harsh judgment of refusing to give candidates their confidence.

The government has now 60 members. What can one say about those people? The traits that they possess include a high level of expertise, a long length of practical work in high-level jobs in different branches of the national economy, a broad look at the incipient problems and the search for the most rational ways to tackle them.

Special mention should be made of a realistic platform for future action. We all remember the take-it-or-leave-it demands made by many People's Deputies to accelerate the solution of social problems, improve the ecological situation as early as possible, jettison the methods of administrative command in management and employ economic levers. Such speeches brought spontaneous applause. A sober analysis revealed, however, how groundless were some of the proposals, a fact later commented upon by the Deputies themselves in their capacity as members of respective committees and commissions.

In a word, the new government's program was keynoted by realistic action and realistic plans. Each candidate concisely formulated his or her platform in front of the People's Deputies. Significant changes were introduced there during an all-round discussion. There is every reason to say that the feedback from the people to the government has finally been restored, since the wishes expressed by the Deputies reflected the opinion of the people who elected them.

The Deputies invariably welcomed a critical examination of the state of affairs, a desire to accomplish a rational structural overhaul and to employ economical methods of work both at the level of enterprises (concerns, associations, and leasing collectives) and in the branch headquarters. The chairmen of two state committees—for cinematography and for the press—even spoke of a possible dissolution of the agencies they head in view of the strengthening of the core link.

There is another important feature characterizing new members of government. All of them are the people of perestroika, put ahead by it. Suffice to say, only 10 people kept leading positions out of the previous cabinet of 1984. State stewardship was taken by the people who have already proved their mettle, those who actively advocate and promote sweeping changes in the economy and social life. The average age is 56, and five of them are under 50.

The remaining vacancies are those of the First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the USSR State Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers for Food and Procurements; Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the State Foreign Economic Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers; USSR Minister of Communication, USSR Minister of Water Conservation, USSR Minister of Oil and Gas Industry, USSR Minister of Culture, USSR Minister of Timber Industry, Chairman of the State Committee for Prices, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Nature Protection, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Physical Culture and Sport, and Chairman of the USSR State Bank.

The government has always consulted men of science and relied on scientists' recommendations. Such reliance has been reinforced manifold and solidified organizationally now. Indeed, the cabinet includes seven Academicians and Corresponding Members of the USSR Academy of Sciences, 11 Doctors of Science. Each of them has his or her

own school that is capable of enriching the leadership's practical work with new theories and new ideas...

The government received a mandate of confidence from the people. And this mandate has to be validated now through practical action.

ABALKIN, Leonid Ivanovich

Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the State Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers for Economic Reform

[Text] Born in 1930. Russian. Member of the CPSU. Graduated from the Moscow Institute of National Economy imeni G. V. Plekhanov. Academician, member of the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Worked as a teacher, chaired the political economy department at the MINE imeni G. V. Plekhanov and at the Academy of Social Sciences under the CPSU Central Committee. Director of the Institute of Economics of the USSR Academy of Sciences since 1986.

[Question] Leonid Ivanovich, it appears that for the first time ever, an economics scholar of world renown has joined the Presidium of the USSR Council of Ministers. This will undoubtedly expedite the practical implementation of the ideas put forward by the Soviet economic school. But you personally are expected to pull a tremendous organizational effort and develop new approaches to work. Do you have any preliminary ideas about the forms of work to be conducted by the Commission that you head?

[Abalkin] Thank you for the compliment. But I realize all too well that a loner is no fighter. Therefore, I intend to rally the best scientific forces in the country around the State Commission for Economic Reform, coupling theory with practice.

We are currently studying the directions and methods of work to be followed by the Commission, but too many things remain unclear still. The main job will be to formulate clear-cut positions, decisions of principle geared towards the elaboration and implementation of the economic reform strategy. It is hard to coordinate immediate measures and to harmonize the restructuring of the planning, financial and loan mechanism, wholesale trade and prices in the process of perestroika without a well-defined concept. There is no doubt that with the present situation being acute, a great many of the everyday problems will have to be tackled. Hard-pressed for time, we have to react swiftly to the processes shaping up in the economy. One of the most challenging tasks faced by the commission is to dovetail the formulation of strategic directions at the current stage of the reform to the solution of a great number of immediate questions.

[Question] Are people in the management system qualified enough to grasp new economic ideas?

[Abalkin] In general, they are not. The majority of managers do not possess the required economic knowledge,

especially up-to-date. They lack economic culture. We have not learned yet how to think in terms of the market, wholesale trade, and financial levers. Besides, many leaders have a dearth of the required knowledge of economic accountability. Therefore, the Commission will focus on the training of managerial personnel and upgrading their skills. We have to decide on the measures to improve drastically the work of the Academy of National Economy, and on its possible restructuring.

[Question] One more question in this connection. Can the system of management pass an objective judgment on economic scholars' recommendations? These recommendations can infringe on the interests of the system itself.

[Abalkin] It is the function of the state and political leaders to evaluate the recommendations made by economic science. I would like to emphasize in this regard the need to clearly distinguish the functions performed by the state in economic management and by economic managers. It is the state stewardship placed above the regional, provincial and departmental interests that is capable of expressing the general needs of economic progress and to shed petty and egotistical interests.

As to the new ideas, they are always hard to evaluate. We know all too well that even science, which is marked by quite a bit of inertia, sometimes fails to grasp new ideas and evaluate them correctly.

[Question] Is it proper then to task the governing body with putting forward proposals on improving management?

[Abalkin] That is a problem. We should distinguish between proposal formulation and implementation, however. The decision making should rest with those who are not bound by narrow goals and interests. It is logical, therefore, that each management unit cannot make decisions about restructuring its own work. This is the function of the legislative power. But it is essential to work on proposals and to keep them ready. It is a matter of principle to have a general concept of improving management and an overall reform strategy. Then we can make any specific decision on any particular issue match general logic.

[Question] You have always advocated alternatives in working on important economic decisions and a broad public debate on the projects. How are you planning to implement such an approach in practical terms now that you are vested with the authority of power?

[Abalkin] It is necessary to formulate and compare alternatives at the legislative level first of all. I think this process will develop at a fast clip. Public organizations, deputies and all those enjoying the power to initiate legislature will come up with various proposals and alternatives. Our press is capable of doing quite a few things during the nationwide debate on different laws and other state acts.

But the formulation of alternatives is not a self-serving end. Serious work should not become play. It is nothing

but a means of finding the most rational decision which must be the only one in the final count and the most effective one, if possible.

And the last thing. We know the proverbial question: "Who are the judges?" It is important not just to formulate alternatives, but to be able—and this is very hard to do—to pick up the most sensible one. This requires the highest professional skills, statesmanship and genuine civic duty.

ANFIMOV, Oleg Grigoriyevich

Minister of the Electrical Equipment Industry and Instrument Making

[Text] Born in 1937. Russian. Graduated from the Riga Polytechnical Institute with a degree in electromechanical engineering. Member of the CPSU. His career path at the Riga electrical machine-building plant included all stages—from a fitter to a director. Held Party positions, including that of the Riga Gorkom Party Secretary and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia. Minister of the USSR Electrical Equipment Industry since 1986.

[Question] Oleg Grigoriyevich, did you admit a possibility of the Supreme Soviet turning down your candidature? If you did, what did you intend to do?

[Anfimov] My comrades asked me the same question, too. It would have been a difficult period in my life, but I would have attributed the decision only to myself. I would have drawn a conclusion and would have taken a job in my line—either as an electrical engineer or as an economist.

[Question] What was the most difficult thing during the nomination procedure?

[Anfimov] I think it was a psychological moment. I had to take many exams in my life, but that one was the worst of them all.

[Question] Don't you think that a Minister's position has lost some of its lure today?

[Anfimov] On the contrary. The procedure of nomination by the Supreme Soviet enhances its prestige, making it more meaningful than before, if you will.

[Question] What shortcomings of the previous government can you mention and what do you think the new cabinet of ministers should focus on?

[Anfimov] The previous governments were taken away with routine and produced a lot of resolutions. They were not always enforced. We should shed such style resolutely. I believe that the government should pay more attention to a new economic mechanism. It exists on paper, but does not do much. Our economy is "rejectionist" at this stage, with most of the directors rejecting orders rather than chasing them.

[Question] What are your minimum and maximum programs?

[Anfimov] My pet dream is about the new economic mechanism going into high gear and embracing scientific and technical progress. I am never tired of repeating that some sources are exhaustible, some have been depleted and scientific and technical progress remains the only inexhaustible one. Whatever the name, all programs are valuable only when they promote progress, forward movement.

[Question] We all look into the future. Don't you think that there will be no need for your ministry one day?

[Anfimov] Why not? I think this should be the case. It is another thing that this cannot be done by a resolution. We need the prerequisites. As they emerge, certain functions performed by the ministry will become defunct. And the ministry itself may disappear then. By the way, strong collectives enjoying highly organized production have started to divorce themselves from our ministry. We have about 30 such enterprises as of today. New processes have started already, as you can see...

[Question] A minister can lose his job this way..

[Anfimov] Of course he can. But right now work takes virtually all my time.

BAKATIN, Vadim Viktorovich

Minister of Internal Affairs

[Text] Born in 1937. Russian. Graduated from the Novosibirsk Civil Engineering Institute and the Academy of Social Sciences under the CPSU Central Committee. Worked on construction teams as a superintendent, department head, administration head, chief engineer of a house construction combine. Performed Party work as a section head, Secretary of the Kemerovo CPSU Obkom, Inspector of the CPSU Central Committee, First Secretary of the Kirov Party Obkom, First Secretary of the Kemerovo CPSU Obkom. USSR Minister of Internal Affairs since 1988. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] People are alarmed over the law and order situation, rising crime. How can this trend be arrested and the situation improved? What immediate steps are being taken now and what will be done in the near future?

[Bakatin] It is true that the situation remains critical. Crime dynamics, nature and structure are characterized by extremely negative trends. Its rate of increase remains very high.

A total of 1.1 million crimes have been registered in the first half-year, including 170 thousand grave crimes. The growth is 32.1 and 39.9 percent, respectively, over the same period last year. The nature and structure of crime is marked by excessive aggressiveness and brutality, an increase in mercenary, gang and organized crime. Conflicts between ethnic groups have become aggravated in some parts of the country.

The crime situation reflects the crises afflicting the economic and social life, as well as the complicated and

contradictory nature of the renovation processes. The law enforcement bodies have unfortunately failed to anticipate the non-uniformity of these phenomena and processes, to come up with neutralizing legal action and respond to them promptly. The legal foundation did not prove to be completely adequate to fight these new elements of crime efficiently.

The situation calls for a better coordinated and organized work by all law enforcement bodies, along with a broad ideological and social support for the action taken by the law enforcement forces.

As its top priority, the MVD should step up the work of militia and investigative bodies in such most pressing areas of crime busting as prevention, operative inquiry and investigation. We should display neither confusion nor a shade of liberalism in interdicting any, and especially vicious anti-social infringements, law violations that pose a threat to public safety, citizens's rights and legitimate interests. These demands have been put forward by the Party, the people and the Soviet government.

Urgent efforts have been doubled to fight organized and street crime, aggravated assault and thefts. Fight against pilfering, bribe-taking and profiteering from shortages is being intensified. Proceedings have been started against 70,000 people, including criminal proceeding against over 30,000 people, for speculation. Militia's operative inquiry units and the investigative apparatus are being reinforced. Their joint action in top priority areas is becoming more purposeful.

A resolute end is being put to the tendency to play it safe and to timidity when applying legitimate sanctions and preventive measures. Arrests and putting the suspects in camera have increased by 25 percent in some areas and regions.

Confidence in militia can be restored through an honest, dedicated, active and effective fight against crime. The militia should win the support of the working people and the public everywhere.

The urgent crime busting measures should be backed up with more resources, material and technical supplies. One cannot avoid spending money here. A drastic technical re-equipment of militia should take place.

[Question] How do you think one can combine further democratization on the one hand and stronger law and order measures and discipline on the other?

[Bakatin] I cannot understand the question put this way. Greater democracy is just impossible without tighter discipline. This is taken for granted. These are the key aspects in restructuring our society. They are inalienably and organically connected. Democracy is not feasible without a conscientious discipline and stronger law enforcement.

Attempts to resolve problems by force that have intensified in some parts of the country have nothing to do with democracy. Tensions between ethnic groups are rising and the foundation of public safety is undermined. We witness

mass disorders on a larger scale, a larger number of victims, more violence and provocations. All this endangers human life in the first place. It undermines the ideas and principles of perestroika and of the law-governed state. Force can and should be used against lawlessness and violence. But this should be the force based on law, will of the people, the force upholding democracy.

BELOUSOV, Boris Mikhaylovich

Minister of the Defense Industry

[Text] Born in 1934. Russian. Graduated from the Taganrog Radio Technical Institute with a degree in electronic engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked at the general machine-building enterprises in Izhevsk. Was department head at the Udmur CPSU Obkom, director of the Izhevsk mechanical plant, Deputy, and USSR First Deputy Minister of Defense, USSR Minister of Machine Building.

[Question] Boris Mikhaylovich, the name of your ministry is self-explanatory. But arms manufacturing leads to low pensions, unpaid debts on frozen loans, shortages of housing, drugs, food...While presenting the program of providing the USSR Armed Forces with modern military gear to the USSR Supreme Soviet, you highlighted the principle of reasonable sufficiency. How do you interpret it?

[Belousov] Everyone should do his or her job well. Our goal is to provide troops with everything necessary for a specific stage of our defense doctrine. But we have been returning part of the budget means allocated for armaments in clearly nonmilitary goods, from cars to photo cameras.

[Question] What is the degree of your participation in conversion?

[Belousov] This includes the development and production of assembly lines to process livestock and poultry, make ice cream, cans as well as the equipment for the light and nonalcoholic industries, beer breweries, manufacture of refrigerating units. Without lowering the armament characteristics, we shall reduce the share of production of special machinery from 65 to 40 percent in the next few years.

The trouble is that our economy has been artificially partitioned into self-contained spheres for decades—the military and civilian ones. The first was given all the best as a rule, while the latter received what remained. Conversion will bring down these partitions to mutual benefit. Our industry is to produce 3.4 billion rubles' worth of nonfood consumer items by 1990 and reach an overall volume of 11.34 billion rubles.

BELOUSOV, Igor Sergeyevich

Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the State Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers

[Text] Born in 1928. Russian. Graduated from the Leningrad Ship-Building Institute with a degree in ship engineering. Started work as a superintendent, shop manager, chief engineer at the S. Ordzhonikidze Baltic plant, chief engineer at the Admiralty plant, then Deputy, First Deputy and the USSR Minister of Ship-Building. Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the state Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers since 1988. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] You head the country's military-industrial complex, whose work has been practically under wraps before. Can you describe the main lines of its work and the tasks it is dealing with?

[Belousov] The military-industrial complex has been tasked first of all to build for, and provide the USSR Armed Forces with up-to-date types of arms and military hardware, on a par with world standards. That is why the complex's scientific and production potential should enable scientists, designers, technical specialists, and workers engaged in defense industries to promptly master new lines of science and technology. Our efforts are channeled in that direction.

At the same time, the defense complex is a major supplier of non-military goods for the national economy, which accounts for over 40 percent of overall output. The complex manufactures one fourth of the country's consumer goods, and the most sophisticated at that. As much as 60 percent of the defense industry capacities will be engaged in the output of economic and consumer goods by 1995. Work is under way to build and manufacture the systems of machinery and technological equipment for agroprom, light industry and trade.

[Question] The Congress of People's deputies asked the government to elaborate until the end of this year a program of converting the defense industry. What methods and approaches underline it?

[Belousov] In doing this work, we proceed from the premise of accomplishing the conversion and preservation of the maximum production capacities at defense enterprises which will be used for civilian production. Besides, the conversion should take place without suspending production and, in addition to solving production and technological tasks, settle social issues of retraining specialists and preserving the same salary levels and enterprises' respective funds.

[Question] Don't you think that affiliation with the defense complex serves as a kind of shield against democratic procedures? Don't you think that you might have been in better shape compared with your colleagues in charge of respective branches of the national economy, the shortcomings of which are much in the public eye? But the defense complex has its own failures, if we recall the recent

accidents with nuclear submarines and airplanes. What caused them and how can you guarantee enhanced safety of military technology?

[Belousov] Under perestroika and glasnost, affiliation with the military-industrial complex cannot serve as a shield against democratic procedures, and the proof of this lies in the discussion of government candidates by committees, commissions and the session of the Supreme Soviet itself.

I think that we are held more responsible for the shortcomings in the defense complex, since this work involves our state's security. The defense complex has always been hallmarked by a high sense of responsibility for the quality of work done. These questions become even more important in conditions of glasnost.

As to the recent nuclear submarine accidents, a thorough scrutiny of their causes is under way. It is essential not just for making amendments in building new ships and airplanes but in using those in commission. We need to review comprehensively the problem of sea rescue and make proposals on designing new technical rescue facilities. Such work has started.

[Question] Defense work is unthinkable without a high level of discipline and responsibility. What do you think should be done to tighten discipline, raise the level of organization and responsibility in the national economy in general?

[Belousov] I am convinced that the main thing is work with people, how to motivate people to raise their skills and enhance their interest in the results of work, instilling them with patriotic spirit. Many shortcomings spring either from low skills or from indifference on the job. Definitely, traditionally the higher demands we put on those working at our enterprises removes slack to a certain extent. But we also instituted special training programs for workers, which are followed by certification to give them the right to perform certain technological operations. We are paying most serious attention to creating conditions for productive work of high quality: we grade people on their jobs, equip and expand the network of factory vocational schools and technicums. I think this should become part and parcel of organizing production at the enterprises in all branches of the national economy.

BIRYUKOVA, Aleksandra Pavlovna

Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the Bureau for Social Development of the USSR Council of Ministers

[Text] Born in 1929. Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Textile Institute with a degree in technical engineering. Covered the road from a superintendent to the chief engineer of the "Trekhgornaya Manafaktura" mill at the enterprises of the light industry. Secretary, Deputy Chairman of the AUCTU for 17 years since 1968. Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the Bureau for Social Development of the USSR Council of Ministers

since October last year. Candidate Member to the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee, deputy to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet.

[Question] The social program put forward by the new USSR government came under scrutiny at the Congress and the USSR Supreme Soviet. Did the comments and proposals made by Deputies affect the plan of action to be taken by the government and the Bureau for Social Development as its standing body?

[Biryukova] I would like to clarify from the very beginning that the Deputies endorsed the principal guidelines for the state's social policies. At the same time, speeches at the Congress naturally made us reappraise the degree of acuteness of some of the problems, specify their priorities and solutions.

The main conclusion that we drew refers to the need to expedite significantly the social re-orientation of the country's economy, tangibly raise the people's living standards, first of all in the low-income sections of the population. That is why we are studying hard now what can be done towards this goal within the remaining 18 months of the Five-Year period. I am sure we will find a solution. However, we count on radically re-orienting the economy towards human needs in the next Five-Year period, the 13th Five-Year period.

The Bureau is working on state programs on family, maternity and childhood, improving women's living and working conditions, and providing full employment to the able-bodied population. Some parts of the country have a surplus workforce and concurrent unemployment.

Another thing. I share the concern of the Deputies over the fact that at the government level cultural management is exercised by the Bureau for Social Development and that the spiritual sphere can become overshadowed by a host of other burning issues. I must say outright that an all-out democratization should be deepened both centrally and locally. The right, functions and, consequently, responsibilities, should be delegated to public organizations, creative unions and associations in a more bold manner. We oppose an automatic application of economic accountability in the cultural field. The government and the Bureau are unanimous in their stand of facilitating in every possible way the development of the material foundation of culture, and improve the living and working conditions of people engaged in this field.

[Question] The social sphere is today one of the greatest concerns for the state. How do you explain placing this heavy burden on a woman?

[Biryukova] The assumption made is probably that women have to deal with this sphere more often than men, and they are better aware of its shortcomings and defects, of which they bear the brunt. In a more serious vein, my experience was taken into account in the first place, since my entire life has been associated with the social sphere. In the AUCCTU, for example, I was charged with labor protection and health, women's care, mother and child

care, leisure, social security, housing and everyday problems, public catering and many, many other things. I represented our country in the UN Committee for Social Development for ten years, which was a good school as well.

[Question] Following the sessions of committees and commissions which supported your candidacy, you admitted in a TV interview that your quick emotions and hot temper made it somewhat difficult to have a dialogue with the Deputies. Do these traits help you or hurt you in your work?

[Biryukova] I would not equate quick emotions with a hot temper. I think that emotions are the striking ability of a person to feel strongly about her own or other people's actions and to take them close to heart. If a person, be it a man or a woman, strongly reacts to certain shortcomings, injustice, defects in work, or is sincere in her joy or sympathy, if this is not an I-do-not-care person, why should this be bad? It is another matter if emotions go over reasonable limits and are detrimental to work. Since I know that I sometimes give vent to my emotions, I try to rein myself in and feel really sorry when I fail. But my hot temper is always explained by my concern for work. And it is never caused by disrespect for people.

[Question] What is your ideal stateswoman? What do you appreciate in your subordinates most of all and what do you resent?

[Biryukova] The ideal remains an ideal because it is never embodied in any one individual. I am hard put to name one particular person of the present or the past.

And still... Do you remember a questionnaire put to the daughters of Karl Marx that contained a similar question? "What do you value in a woman most of all?" "In a man?" Marx answered at that time: "Weakness in a woman and strength in a man." Elaborating on that answer, I would describe an ideal stateswoman as being as good a worker as the best of men in the same job, who remains "weak" at the same time, not shedding a single feminine trait.

In my subordinates, I appreciate promptness, competence and an ability to think and act in non-standard terms. I resent unconscientiousness, slowness and the striving to take a cue from the boss. I am sure that you cannot rely on a person who does not have an opinion or a stand of his or her own.

BREZHNEV, Vladimir Arkadiyevich

Minister of Transport Construction

[Text] Born in 1931. Russian. Graduated from the Odessa Hydrotechnical Institute with a degree in hydro engineering. Started his working career as a fitter, then worked in construction organizations in the Far East, the Ukraine, and the Volga area. Worked as a superintendent, head of a construction administration, trust managing director, and Deputy, First Deputy Minister of the USSR of Transport Construction for ten years. USSR Minister of Transport Construction since 1985.

[Question] Vladimir Arkadiyevich, the session of the Supreme Soviet expressed concern over the country's transportation network. What role is your Ministry playing in upgrading it and what measures are being taken to increase the efficiency of work done by transport construction workers?

[Brezhnev] It is true that the condition of a transportation network symbolizes a degree of civilization, if you may. The projects put up by construction collectives in the industry testify to our contribution. Most of them are railroads—new railroads and stations. Highways are another important direction. We build bridges, tunnels, metro and ports. In one year we've done work to the tune of over seven billion rubles.

We are thinking about the ways of increasing labor efficiency in the industry. A radically new technical level of construction has to be achieved, and the modern comprehensive mechanization facilities in construction and assembly work have to be introduced which would guarantee the projects' high quality and long life.

[Question] Are there any changes in industry management?

[Brezhnev] One quarter of all the trusts operates according to the second model of economic accountability. At these enterprises, the collectives work harder, and they will complete this year over 30 percent of the overall volume of subcontracting. But new problems have cropped up. We have persistently shifted completion schedules from the fourth quarter of the year, for example, to the second and third quarters, when the weather is warmer and labor expenses are lower. In 1987, for instance, we used to commission up to 86 percent of housing and 92 percent of new lines prior to October 1. But on gaining independence, the trusts pushed us far behind. This year more than half of the projects are scheduled to be completed in the fourth quarter again. It proved hard to match the collectives' independent economic management with state interests. This leaves much room for thought and work.

[Question] The Baykal-Amur railroad is often described as "billions of rubles sunk into the permafrost." How do you evaluate such statement?

[Brezhnev] It is true that the construction of BAM was costly for the country. But we shall look into the future too! This year we are to put the entire length of BAM in permanent operation, including the open bypass of the North Muysk tunnel. The Ministry of Communications has estimated that this will considerably reduce the load on the Trans-Siberian railroad as early as 1990 and increase the freight turnover handled by the Baykal-Amur railroad more than six times over by 1992.

I can say that the capital invested in the Bamovskaya-Tynda-Berkakit section linking the Trans-Siberian railroad with southern Yakutiya has been already recovered. The construction of the Amur-Yakutiya railroad from the Berkakin station was launched in 1985. The economists estimate that its construction costs will be recovered in less than three years.

BYKOV, Valeriy Alekseyevich

Minister of the USSR Medical Industry

[Text] Born in 1938. Russian. Graduated from the Kuibyshev Industrial Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering for apparatuses of chemical productions. Candidate of Technical Sciences. Conducted research work in college, worked at oil refineries and chemical plants. Was involved in Party work, First Secretary of the Party Gorkom and head of the sector at the CPSU Central Committee. Headed the main directorate of microbiological industry under the USSR Council of Ministers. Minister of the USSR Medical and Microbiological Industry since 1985. Member of the Central Auditing Commission of the CPSU.

[Question] Valeriy Alekseyevich, the social direction of your Ministry is seen from its name. The products turned out by the industry are of vital importance for the people. At the same time, the editorial board receives quite a few signals from our readers about the absence of staple medicine in pharmacies.

[Bykov] Yes, the population notices any of our shortcomings immediately. The more so when we talk about the shortages of our main products.

One of the reasons is that the country does not keep tab on the scientific demand for medicine and its production. Besides, the demand for medicine has outpaced the projected growth in recent years. This gap amounts to 32 percent in 1990, for example. I think herein lies the consequences of the error we made in our health service—counting not on preventive medicine but on the treatment of ailments.

[Question] What do you think should be done?

[Bykov] At present, we are not responsible for meeting the demand of hospitals and pharmacies in required drugs. This is the job of a special association at the USSR Ministry of Health. It would be more logical to make the Ministry of Medical Industry fully in charge of providing the country with medicine, whether home-made or imported. The doctors' job is to treat patients, while we in industry should supply them. We wish we did not have intermediaries so that we could react to changes in real demand more quickly.

[Question] Does it mean that you advocate direct ties with consumers?

[Bykov] This is the only way. These measures require no additional investments, by the way. Moreover, we are prepared to assume control of the entire industry producing drugs and medicine. We are prepared to tackle the problem of manufacturing disposable syringes, droppers, intravenous catheters, dialyzers, blood containers; in a word, any disposable polymer systems. It would be a good thing to assign to our Ministry the rights of a general contractor with the right to distribute the means received from the USSR Ministry of Health among the co-producers. We have in mind a smooth cooperation. Then

we would have been able to boost the output of medicine even now. If we legalize benefits for all those engaged in medicine manufacture, the suppliers will have a stake in producing such things. In a word, far-reaching changes in the economic mechanism are required.

CHAZOV, Yevgeniy Ivanovich

Minister of Health

[Text] Born in 1929. Russian. Graduated from the Kiev Medical Institute with a degree of general practitioner. Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor, Academician of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Medical Sciences. Started his career as a clinic surgeon, and later carried out scientific work in the Research Institute of Therapy of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences, where his career spanned jobs from a junior scientific associate to managing director of the A.L. Myasnikov Research Institute. Head of the Fourth Main Administration of the USSR Ministry of Public Health since 1976, Member of the Ministry Collegium, Deputy Minister. USSR Minister of Health since 1987. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] The very fact that you have been nominated candidate to the position of the USSR Minister of Public Health for the second time testifies to your successful work in the previous government. Are you satisfied by what has been accomplished in public health?

[Chazov] Yes and no. I'm glad that our society and state have finally turned to face the public health problems. The program for restructuring the system of protecting the health of the Soviet people, put in action following the decree by the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers, provides for setting up an up-to-date material and technical foundation, laying down new principles of organizing and managing public health, including per capita financing depending on specific regional conditions, switching over to evaluating work by quality criteria, sensible decentralization and delegation of management functions down to the local level. This has not just been stated, but is being implemented and backed with additional means and funds.

The country's sanitary service went into a higher gear. It should become an effective force fighting environmental pollution. The "USSR Sanitary Code" under preparation now should give the force of law to the measures of protecting human habitat against the pernicious effect of industry, normalize working conditions and improve the quality of food. Mother and child care has been assigned top priority, with 40 percent of capital construction and considerable foreign currency earnings in this area having enabled us to reduce infant mortality in just the past two years.

I'm not satisfied by perestroyka making small strides in public health. A large portion of managers and officials, work collectives have not adopted new thinking. Many vital orders to produce medicine, disposable syringes, medical equipment have not been fulfilled and scientific

achievements are not being introduced well enough. Salaries remain impermissibly low which cannot but affect the quality composition of medical workers. Construction has lagged behind. Allocations over the past two years to the tune of 400 million rubles have not been put to use.

Health protection will never be satisfactory unless these problems are resolved. Much work still lies ahead here.

[Question] Did the discussion of health service problems by the USSR Supreme Soviet add any new elements to the Minister's program?

[Chazov] The discussion helped to specify tactics and receive support for strategy, including new approaches to financing (state hospital insurance pools), per capita norms, evaluation of the quality of work, decentralization and the role to be played by local Soviets (Republican, territorial, oblast). This is where we should start from.

[Question] The press has always been full of criticism for the Ministry of Public Health. It has been amplified now by the deputies' sharp questions. Does such an "invasion of foreign territory" help to improve work or does it hurt, making things less predictable?

[Chazov] How can one doubt such questions if they are businesslike, constructive and good for public health, and consequently, for the people? I think that additional local information is very important, which allows us to interfere and to help at the right time.

In the meantime, many issues were raised which clearly can and should be handled locally. This applies first of all to additional supplies, finances, and specific local management problems.

[Question] How do you evaluate the relations between two "kindred" ministries, the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Medical Industry?

[Chazov] The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Medical Industry should work hand-in-hand 24 hours a day, since we face a host of problems. The questions of departmentalism still crop up, but we try to overcome them together, achieving greater mutual understanding and mutual interaction.

CHIRSKOV, Vladimir Grigoriyevich

Minister of Construction of Petroleum and Gas Industry Enterprises

[Text] Born in 1935, Russian. Graduated from the all-Union Finance and Economic Institute by correspondence with a degree in economics. Candidate of Technical Sciences. Began his working career at the "Tuymazyneftey" trust in the Bashkir ASSR, worked as a managing director of the "Tyumengazmechanizatsia" trust, head of the Glavsibtruboprovodstroy in the Tuymen Oblast. Deputy, First Deputy Minister of the USSR for the Construction of the Enterprises of Oil and Gas Industry since 1978. Minister of this industry since 1984. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Let's try to discuss the industry's problems in an unusual way. What steps is the Ministry taking to reduce to the maximum (if not rule out completely) the negative consequences of the invasion of nature?

[Chirskov] You are right in saying that production matters have been discussed in detail, while ecology remains our sore point. So, how can we limit the degree of gross interference in the environment? I think we should start with an in-depth and all-round examination and taking ecology into account in our projects. Each decision should be subject to a strict and independent scrutiny at the project stage. What is equally important is that everyone working in the industry should change his or her psychological attitude towards nature and see to it that the faster-than-average construction of nature conservation projects, their quality and reliability become a standard practice.

From the technical point of view, the construction processes should be industrialized as much as possible. The most labor-intensive ones should be placed under factory conditions, leaving only assembly work on the construction site.

A critical analysis of industry's operation over the past few years has been made. A comprehensive ecological program encompassing scientific, design, project and practical studies has been prepared. I believe that its implementation will help raise the ecological standards of construction to the required level.

[Question] Vladimir Grigoriyevich, those who build oil and gas pipelines are usually nomads. What is being done to make their life and work easier?

[Chirskov] The industry made a turnaround in the current five-year plan period. Compared with 1985, the volume of work in the social sphere increased by 1.7 times. Housing conditions have been improved for 45 thousand families of oil and gas construction workers. Another 30 thousand families will receive well-appointed apartments till the end of the five-year period. We think we shall be able to meet the demand for pre-school children's institutions by 1991, and that for sanatoria, holiday centers, rest houses and other recreational facilities, in the 13th five-year plan period. Housing amenities and social and cultural facilities for shift workers will be put on a new technical basis. A program is under way to receive 30 kg of meat and 70 kg of milk per one working person from agricultural subsidiary plots.

[Question] What do the industry enterprises do to increase the production of consumer goods?

[Chirskov] Large shopfloor areas are being reconverted into the output of such products. This year will see the completion of 18 service stations along the 4,000-km long Surgut-Tyumen-Black Sea highway. We plan to increase the construction of single-family houses for rural areas.

The industry enterprises are doing a great deal to help the country's agro-industrial complex to expand the material

and technical base of the processing facilities. 1,750 slaughter-houses and meat-packing factories will be built by 1995.

DAVLETOVA, Lyudmila Yelmatovna

USSR Minister

[Text] Born in 1940, Kazakh. Graduated from the Tashkent Textile Institute and the Academy of Social Sciences under the CPSU Central Committee with a degree in garment technology engineering. Worked at the enterprises of the light industry. Was Secretary of the Republican Trade Union Committee of the Workers of the Textile and Light Industry of the Kazakh SSR, Deputy Minister of the Republic's light industry. Department head and then Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan since 1983.

[Question] Lyudmila Yelmatovna, you are the first woman minister in the government in the past few years. Why do you think men "give away" ministers' portfolios so rarely?

[Davletova] It is not just ministers' portfolios that men cede to women so reluctantly. Women's rights are much talked about these days, but the more they talk, the less women get. I do not think it accidental that the industries dominated by the fair sex, like services, have developed on the residual basis in general. I think this is a direct reflection of attitude to women.

The Congress of People's Deputies and the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet instill confidence in perestroika helping to solve this painful issue as well, enabling women to display their zeal, ability to work hard, skills and competence to the full in order to solve important problems.

[Question] What do you think about your responsibilities to people who want to have nice goods?

[Davletova] To begin with, we should straighten out the huge potential of the light industry already available, define the reasons behind slow growth and work out and take remedial measures. It is also important to introduce broad cooperative and leasing forms of work organization at the light industry enterprises, to set up concerns and associations. In a word, put to work everything that helps to boost the production of goods and improve their quality.

Much has to be done to formulate a long-range policy as far as product lines are concerned. It should be tailored to the future development of new types of primary and other materials, technologies, machinery and equipment, and take into account, of course, the need to improve consumer qualities of goods and raise income levels for different groups of the population.

One thing that is clear is the need to apply tremendous effort to end the stagnation of the light industry. If we fail to do this, people will not understand me and will have every right to deny me their trust.

DOGUZHIYEV, Vitaliy Khusseynovich**Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the State Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers for Emergencies**

[Text] Born in 1935, Adyghei. Graduated from Dnepropetrovsk State University with a degree in mechanical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked as a technology engineer, and shop superintendent in Chelyabinsk Oblast. Director of Minobshchemash enterprises since 1967. Deputy, First Deputy, Minister of USSR general machine building since 1983.

[Question] Vitaliy Khusseynovich, why is there a need for a state commission for emergencies?

[Doguzhiyev] This is the inevitable, although overdue, conclusion drawn from the analysis of the causes of the industrial and ecological disasters that happened in our country in the past few years, as well as of the measures to prevent them or eliminate their consequences. We need a single comprehensive system of protecting the population from industrial accidents, breakdowns and natural disasters, including preparations ahead of time to act in extreme situations, and good coordination and harmonization of the required special services. Another important goal is to conduct effective technical policies aimed at developing survival, restoration, search and rescue equipment.

Disasters take a toll of human lives and cause significant economic damage. As many as 790 major industrial accidents happened in 1988 alone. We annually register about one million cases of group injuries; about 250-260 thousand people die as a result of accidents, poisonings and injuries. As you can see, the losses are tremendous and unrecoverable. That is the reason why we should take radical measures, establish a reliable system to protect people, build safer equipment, transport, industrial projects, and tighten technological discipline.

The country has a number of departments, organizations, and services in charge of safety engineering in different branches, of survival and rescue work. These include the fire department, the USSR MVD, Civil Defense and many others. Many ministries have departmental search, rescue, damage control and survival crews, including the USSR Ministry of Energy, the USSR Ministry of the Oil and Gas Industry, the USSR Ministry of the Coal Industry, and the USSR Ministry of the Chemical Industry.

The country did not have, however, a single system taking care of a preemptive and purposeful preparation of all the forces to take a coordinated action under extreme conditions and to provide them with the necessary technical and special facilities. It did not have a single body to streamline this work.

The State Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers for Extraordinary Situations should become such a body. Its organization should lead to the formation of a statewide system of preparing for action under extreme conditions. In its work, the State Commission will also deal with pressing ecological issues, coordinate its activities with the

USSR State Committee for Nature. As Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, I was put in charge of this Committee.

[Question] What immediate problems should the Commission take on?

[Doguzhiyev] The Commission to be set up should develop an all-out program of future work and determine which ways and means are required for this. We shall also work out a draft law dealing with this and put it for debate by the USSR Supreme Soviet. This is a matter of principle. I believe that a draft law is essential to deal with the problem of creating a system of population protection against industrial, transport accidents and disasters, natural disasters. We need firm and clear-cut legal ground for this.

[Question] Does it mean that the State Commission will both organize emergency operations and work to prevent accidents and enhance the safety of industrial and transport facilities?

[Doguzhiyev] Yes, I think that the Commission will focus on establishing a comprehensive state system of providing such safety. We shall act, therefore, not just when we have to eliminate an accident or disaster. Efforts to forestall such events are equally important.

It is a very challenging large-scale goal to set up such an overall system of course. Quite a lot of time—possibly not less than 18 months—will be required to do this. It is the first time that such a body is being established in our country.

[Question] Indeed, this is virgin ground. How can you capitalize on your experience in the branch you used to manage?

[Doguzhiyev] My previous job involved the development of missile and space missile technology, of unique blastoff and testing complexes which were extremely prone to explosion and fire. We had to take care of safe storing and testing large quantities of missile fuel. I was also in charge of organizing the storage and servicing of nuclear missile weapons. You realize, of course, that the main concern was to ensure utmost safety and to prevent accidents. The main thing was to take care of the smallest details, which can turn out to be crucial if a dangerous situation emerges. I think the same approach has to be taken with regard to establishing a state system for protecting the population from industrial and transport accidents and natural disasters.

In its future work, the State Commission will concentrate on organizing interaction between various departments and services. I will definitely profit from the similar experience I gained while coordinating the work on the multi-use "Energy-Buran" space system which involved over 1,200 organizations and plants belonging to many ministries and agencies. The task we shall have to accomplish now is as challenging and important. I will devote all my experience, knowledge and efforts to it.

DURASOV, Vladimir Aleksandrovich

First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee

[Text] Born in 1935. Russian. Graduated from the Urals Polytechnical Institute and the Academy of National Economy under the USSR Council of Ministers with degrees in metallurgical engineering, economics, organization of economic management and planning. Member of the CPSU. Conducted scientific and research work, worked at the nonferrous metallurgy enterprises, in the apparatus of the USSR Ministry of Nonferrous Metallurgy, as director of the Yuzhuralnikel combined works, Deputy Minister of the USSR Nonferrous Metallurgy, then deputy department head at the CPSU Central Committee. USSR Minister of Nonferrous Metallurgy since 1986.

[Question] What kind of problems will you deal with in the USSR Gosplan, the supreme economic body of the country?

[Durasov] I should say from the outset that I will work in an organ that firstly has a rich experience in collective management and, secondly, a powerful scientific potential. I will be directly involved in tackling the questions of overall national economic planning. These include long-range planning for republics and regions, summarization and economic analysis, financial problems, provision of material and technical support and balances, environmental protection, scientific and technical progress and so on.

[Question] The scope of work is broad enough. Evidently, you will prioritize...

[Durasov] The USSR Gosplan and other economic bodies should urgently find the means [financial] to deal with the goals set by the USSR Congress of People's Deputies. I am referring to pensions and the development of health care in the fits place. It is necessary to formulate urgent practical financially-backed measures to bring about the recovery of the commodity market. Top priority should be given to boosting the output of consumer goods and an early implementation of the Food Program. We should immediately eliminate the slowdown in housing construction. Proceeding from the decisions adopted at the Congress, I think we should speed-up the implementation of the comprehensive program for the development of the non-black earth zone.

[Question] These goals are hard to reach without adopting the most serious measures in rational resource-saving.

[Durasov] Of course. I think that we cannot talk about any balance without a policy of rigid resource-cutting. It is common knowledge that our level of energy and material use per unit of production is 1.5-2 times higher than foreign standards, and this is a real and tremendous reserve for raising economic efficiency.

A very short span of time that is left to adopt effective economic measures is the main factor that prompts us to take on this problem immediately. Some problems have to

be resolved in the matter of months, 12 to 18 months at the most. So, we shall work according to these deadlines.

FILIMONOV, Leonid Ivanovich

Minister of the Petroleum and Gas Industry

[Text] Born in 1935. Russian. Graduated from the Ufa Oil Institute with a degree in mining engineering at oil and gas deposits. Member of the CPSU. Working career ranged from assistant driller to the head of oil drilling at the Sakhalin oil administration. Worked at oil industry enterprises in the Bashkir Autonomous SSR, Tyumen and Tomsk Oblasts. Was general manager of the Tomskneft production association and then headed the Nizhnevartovskneftgas production association. Worked as First Deputy Minister of the USSR Oil and Gas Industry, and from 1988 as First Deputy Minister of the USSR Petroleum Industry.

[Question] Leonid Ivanovich, you visited the USA recently. Will you look at your industry through the eyes of American oil men. What can we learn from them?

[Filimonov] We held a series of active talks with MacDermont on starting a joint oil and gas venture on the Sakhalin Island bed. I would say that the Americans show much interest in developing our industry. We receive many proposals from American firms on starting joint ventures and on cooperating in certain areas of oil and gas production. We still lead in the fullest possible recovery of oil, for example, and the American partners are prepared to pay hard currency for our know-how and jointly search for new avenues of upgrading technological processes.

Yet American partners view us as clumsy bears. We still export only crude oil while possessing huge natural resources of hydrocarbons, a strong structure of oil and gas refineries and research institutions. Yet our country has all it takes to emerge as a leading supplier of refined oil products and an exporter of progressive technology and up-to-date equipment.

[Question] The former Oil and Gas Ministries are known to have worked according to the first model of economic accountability. What economic model will your combined department adopt?

[Filimonov] Full economic accountability and self-financing enabled the industry to a large extent to produce 624.3 million tons of oil and 770 billion cubic meters of gas in the country as a whole in 1988. Commodity unit costs have been cut down in 18 months and about 2.5 billion rubles of profit have been received above plan.

A number of enterprises and associations adopted the so-called second model as the most effective form of economic accountability, based on the normative profit distributions. About 30 associations and enterprises are using it successfully at present.

Industry-wide economic accountability is on the horizon, I think, as far as the economic model for the Ministry as a whole is concerned. It is a real way of solving a huge

number of social problems facing oil and gas men, accelerating technical re-tooling and, finally, just distribution of earned foreign currency. Doesn't it come across as absurd that the oil and gas industry, while providing the country with large amounts of foreign currency, has no money to buy abroad the most essential things to accomplish the tasks of social and economic development.

[Question] The law has codified the right of working collectives to leave associations and to effect foreign trade transactions. Which of your enterprises are ready to jump the ministry's ship and ply the economic waters on their own?

[Filimonov] Enterprises still face many serious obstacles on the way towards complete economic freedom. I think that the enterprises will hold the ministry's coattails as long as a free domestic market of material and technical resources does not firm up and financial shortages are not eliminated.

But our industry is debating the question of associations even now. Working collectives, geophysical enterprises, for example, came up with interesting proposals of establishing a completely independent association based on economic accountability. Such principles can be applied to the subindustry of oil transportation. Independent machine-building emerging in the industry can be organized as a concern. In a word, we need initiatives from working collectives and thorough economic feasibility studies.

The ministry will concentrate on formulating a concept of the industry's development, coordinating finances and resources, accelerating scientific and technical progress, providing centralized servicing to the enterprises, be it banking or foreign economic activities.

[Question] A government commission is known to be investigating the tragic accident at the Ministry of Oil Industry's oil pipeline in Bashkiriya. It will report its finding of course... But have you made any conclusions for yourself?

[Filimonov] I was not directly involved in the work of the government commission, since other leading specialists of ours took part in its work. Of course, all industry workers—from teams to the ministry's apparatus—have drawn most stern conclusions from this.

The accident has confirmed again that there is no alternative to safety. This law should be observed during designing, construction and operation of oil and gas projects. An omission at any of the stages of this cycle can mean trouble.

The industry is implementing a program of urgent measures to prevent accidents at pipelines. The present systems are thoroughly examined, construction norms and maintenance rules are being tightened. Related industries are actively involved in this.

[Question] Leonid Ivanovich, when did you go to the theater, go hunting or fishing last time? What do you do for fun?

[Filimonov] When asked this question, people used to complain about lack of any free time. I thought it was just phrase-mongering but as my career advanced it became clear that unfortunately this is true. Meetings and conferences eat up the better half of my working day. I'll try to change this practice, at least in the Ministry. Let people rather learn how to use a personal computer during their working hours. They did not teach you this before, but age is no problem.

I love theater. Each time I visited Moscow in the past, I found time to go to the opening nights, to go to the opera. I loved fishing and hunting when I worked in Sakhalin and in the Tomsk and Tyumen Oblasts. Now I prefer reading. Most entries in my library card are for technical and historical literature.

GABRIELYANTS, Grigoriy Arkadiyevich

Minister of Geology

[Text] Born in 1934. Armenian. Member of the CPSU. Graduated from the Azerbaizhan Industrial Institute with a degree in geology and oil and gas prospecting. Doctor of Geological and Mineralogical Sciences, Professor. Worked in geological survey parties, research institutions, taught at a college. Was director of the All-Union Research Geological Survey and Oil Institute of the USSR Ministry of Geology.

[Question] The USSR has the world's largest deposits of oil, gas, iron ore, a number of nonferrous metals. We lead the world in the deposits of some other deposits. At the same time, the Congress of People's Deputies expressed alarm over the country's raw material base. What is the problem and what solutions do you suggest?

[Gabrielyants] I think that the premise about us having inexhaustible resources is plainly harmful. It is true that nature generously endowed our country, but it is also true that we have not become economical owners and learned the lessons that the world had already mastered unpardonably slow. The proven oil and gas reserves will last for several decades.

Isn't this fine? Not at all. The main scourge of our geology lies in the ill-famous volume production and a mismatch between the interests of producers and consumers. Judge for yourself. Yamal has 13,000 billion cubic meters of ready gas reserves, but its extraction is not planned either for the next five-year period, nor till year 2000. Billions of rubles in investments have been sunk in the ground, there is no payoff, while the geologists are urged to increase reserves every year by another one billion cubic meters of gas. What for?

That is why we are suggesting a new strategy of preparing mineral deposits. It is based on geological and economic models of developing regions and the country as a whole. In this manner we can receive maximum return.

[Question] Geology is known to be one of the few industries in which all enterprises operate according to the second model of economic accountability. What are the pros and cons of this?

[Gabielyants] The use of economic accountability in geological survey has already reduced the cost of ton of increased reserves by one quarter, cut down the commodity and material reserves by almost 20 percent, made redundant 16,000 people and increased investments in the social sphere by 236 million rubles. This is the "net profit" received from economic accountability.

But has economic accountability protected the interests of consumers? Has a cost-reduction mechanism been set up when the industry is financed from the state budget? I think that these questions have been resolved only partially, to put it mildly. What is the main headache? If we remember Marx, any commodity should have a price. But the resources in our bowels are free, and there is no direct dependence between the economic interests of a geological survey enterprise and how the proven reserves become involved in the national economy. An important element of a cost-reducing mechanism in the industry is to set the price for a final product and to shift to contractual relations.

There is an international aspect of economic accountability, too. At present, the USSR Ministry of Geology conducts work in 30 countries of the world, either as part of a loan extended by our country or as part of technical assistance. Neither the state nor we find it profitable. We are paid for the work done at best, not for the value of a deposit discovered.

To get out of the dead end, we should have venture projects, like all international firms of our profile are doing, by the way. Under the contract, if we discover new deposits, we shall retain a definite share of the mineral reserves, which we can either ship into our country or sell for foreign currency.

[Question] And the last question. Which of your awards are you proud of most of all?

[Gabielyants] The "Discoverer of a Deposit" sign, which was awarded for discovering the first gas deposit in the Karakum desert. The desert became a gas province after that, and the Karakum-Center main gas pipeline was started from there in the mid-60s.

GERASHCHENKO, Viktor Vladimirovich

Chairman of the USSR State Bank

[Text] Born in 1937. Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Institute of Finance with a degree in financing and loans. Member of the CPSU. Started out as a bookkeeper. Then worked as a controller, expert, department head of the currency and cash flow administration of the USSR Bank for Foreign Trade. Was director of the Moscow Narodny bank in London, head of this bank's branches in Lebanon and Singapore, Chairman of the Board of the Ost-West Handelsbank in Frankfurt am

Mein, FRG. First Deputy Chairman of the Board of the USSR Bank for Foreign Economic Activity since 1985.

[Question] While working for the Bank for Foreign Economic Activity, you had an opportunity to learn international banking experience well. What can we use in this experience?

[Gerashchenko] The restructuring of the country's economic mechanism on the basis of commodity and monetary relations, economic decentralization and establishing a framework for independent decisions will undoubtedly require, if we follow world practice, that we introduce changes in the USSR loan and banking systems. The main thing is to change the methods of regulating the circulation of money and loans through economic means, introducing new types of savings for enterprises and individuals and establishing a network of commercial banks for extending alternative loans [non government] to the economic entities.

[Question] What ways of enhancing the State Bank's role in the country's economic life and increasing its independence do you see?

[Gerashchenko] The role and possibilities of the State Bank were weakened somewhat as a result of the 1987 banking reform and establishment of five specialized state banks. It became an elder brother among equals, so to speak. The countries that have developed commodity and monetary markets have a double-tier banking system, where only the central bank has the right to issue money and determine the volume of money supply. Banking legislation is to be worked out which will enhance the role played by the State Bank, determine its relationship with industry-wide and commercial banks, including the specialized ones.

[Question] What do you think should be the relationship between the USSR State Bank and the USSR Ministry of Finance?

[Gerashchenko] The established relationship of the country's banking system with the Ministry of Finance results in mixing up the areas of using budget grants and bank loans, artificially ballooning the solvent demand in the economy and destabilizing money supply. Bank loans intended to cover state budget expenditures and turned into budget allocations, as well as unrepayable financing hidden under the guise of growing debt of enterprises and branches, undermine economic accountability and create false guidelines for the economic policy. Direct state loans from banks, enterprises, cooperatives and the population should be practiced to cover for the budget expenditures, while accumulating their real savings.

By centralizing the issue of loans and money by the USSR State Bank, such loans will not increase money supply, if both short-term and investment-type bank credits will be given on a strictly commercial basis and repayments are made.

[Question] Proposals were made at the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet to place the USSR State Bank under the Supreme Soviet. What do you think about this?

[Gerashchenko] A country's Central Bank in the countries with developed commodity and money markets is subordinated not to the government but to the parliament as a rule. But both loans and the budget provide means for the economy. Therefore, even in those countries the financial and banking institutions cannot pursue any serious policy of regulating the country's economic processes, without coordinating it. The matter of placing the USSR State Bank under the Supreme Soviet is that of time and the development of commodity and money markets in our country.

[Question] What changes should the present banking system undergo in your view? What role should joint stock and cooperative banks play in this system?

[Gerashchenko] Evolution of our economic mechanism should suggest the best possible structure of the loan and banking system. The following conditions are necessary in my view to give a self-moving impulse of development of the loan and banking system:

- build loan and money mechanisms on the principles of centralizing the money emission functions in the USSR State Bank and the operation of banks on the basis of the really deposited funds;
- organize banking on the principles of complete economic accountability, including competition among banks whether they are state, joint stock or cooperative;
- support the initiative advanced by the lower economic entities and the territorial organs of power to open new banking institutions and to give the enterprises the right to choose the bank they want to service them;
- adopt banking legislation.

GUSEV, Vladimir Kuzmich

Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the Bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers for the Chemical and Timber Complex

[Text] Born in 1932. Russian. Graduated from Saratov State University and the Saratov Economics Institute with degrees in chemistry and economics. Candidate of technical sciences. Worked at the Engels Synthetic Fiber Factory (Saratov Oblast), and was director of the factory. Performed Party work from 1975 to 1985; was elected First Secretary of the Saratov Obkom of the CPSU. Worked as First Deputy Chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers. Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the Bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers for the Chemical and Timber Complex since 1986. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Vladimir Kuzmich, the complex that you head is one of the most difficult in our national economy. On the one hand, we experience a severe shortage of chemical

materials, since we lag behind many advanced countries in their production. On the other hand, people object to the location of chemical plants on their territory. How is this dilemma to be solved?

[Gusev] Ecology is, in effect, a very burning issue. Anti-chemical sentiments are nothing unusual. Objections are heard against the location and construction of drug plants, atomic power stations and even against the utilization of the concurrent oil gases that now burn in flares in the Tyumen Oblast. What is behind such total rejection?

First, groups of people tend to be egotistic. The protection provided by the state and society for many years gave birth to a firm conviction among members of society that no matter how they work, they will never "die from starvation," so to speak, that the state and society will definitely take care of them. Our citizens naively believe that even if all electric power stations are shut down, electric bulbs will continue to burn in their houses. In other words, the government and the state will not be allowed to leave the population without electricity.

Second, the unsatisfactory operation of individual chemical plants which cause damage to nature for various reasons. I must say that only a minority of plants operate that way. Most of them fit into the environment, not exceeding the established ecological norms. We already have a number of production collectives which have organized technological processes in such a way as to practically exclude any outflow disposal. These include the "Minudobreniye" association in Voskresensk, "Nizhnemskneftekhim" production association, the medical polymer plant in Belgorod-Dnestrov.

Third, a lack of knowledge of chemistry. Few people realize that the level of development of science makes it possible to make any process free of outflow and waste disposal. In most cases, however, this is very costly. The air and water pollution should be blamed not on chemistry but on the people who failed to improve the production process, manufactured defective equipment and are using it in a slipshod way.

[Question] The same pressing problems are faced by many operating plants in the industry which are not ecologically clean. The population demand that they be shut down. How do you react to such a critical situation as a person? What urgent remedial measures are required?

[Gusev] I feel hurt very often because of the position taken by our local organs of power. By laying claims about environmental pollution, they often remain indifferent to unsatisfactory construction of nature conservation projects. Only 40 to 60 percent of the money allocated for the construction of purification and gas-trapping facilities is put to use.

I would like to emphasize that the crisis situation can be defused only through the broad involvement of the public in the solution of the problems and a detailed explanation of the measures to be taken and goals pursued. An important role is to be played by mass media in this regard, competent and objective speeches by leading scientists,

political and public figures, medical workers, and representatives of monitoring organizations. Technical progress is irreversible and chemical technology is not an exception. The calls "to stop" chemistry are utterly unrealistic, in my view.

We see the solution to this problem in speeding up the overhaul of the existing productions by introducing highly productive modern equipment and ecologically clean processes. According to the estimates, the chemical industry can be made acceptable to the population in 5 or 6 years, ensuring the social and economic well being of Soviet society.

[Question] Vladimir Kuzmich, you used to occupy the position of the First Deputy Chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers. How is your work now different, ignoring the larger scale, of course?

[Gusev] The distinction lies in the utmost responsibility for the decisions made. It is no longer possible to ignore problems and pass the buck to another, more influential body. Furthermore, the scope of issues under consideration has broadened considerably and their relationships have become more involved. Since specific problems crop up every day, the pace of work has quickened and the shortage of time has become worse. Finally, present conditions play a role. We live today in an entirely different time than that of four years ago. We saw a tremendous increase in demands on the leaders to comprehend the prospects for development and in the influence that the public is exerting on decisions concerning the environment.

ISAYEV, Aleksandr Sergeyevich

Chairman of the State Committee for Forestry

[Text] Born in 1931. Russian. Graduated from the S.M. Kirov Leningrad Timber Chemical Academy with a degree in forestry. Doctor of Biological Sciences, Academician of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Started his working career as an engineer with an aircraft tree-planting party. Conducted scientific work from 1960. Deputy Director of the V.N. Sukhachyov Institute of Forestry and Timber since 1972 and director of this Institute since 1977. Elected Chairman of the Presidium of the Krasnoyarsk affiliate of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1980. Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Forestry since 1988.

[Question] Aleksandr Sergeyevich, you are known as a top scientist. How do you evaluate your possibilities as Chairman of the USSR Committee for Forestry?

[Isayev] An expert in forest ecology has become a timber manager. Are you perplexed by the second part of this word combination? I do have practical work experience. It is a bothersome job to manage the Institute and a major scientific center of the USSR Academy of Sciences. The USSR State Committee for Forestry is a more difficult eparchy to run, so to speak, not only in its structure and size, but because of the problems inherited by the industry from the past years.

I had great doubts and uncertainties when I agreed to the proposal to manage it. But I was convinced of one thing—the times when science had only a consultative voice in forest management is a thing of the past. It is impossible to break the deadlock over the timber economy and to solve ecological problems without scientific outlook. That is why we formulated a concept of replenishable and able forest management based on the nationwide "Forest" state program. What is important, the team of the central apparatus drafted specialists capable of offbeat thinking. I see these comrades-in-arms as my support base in dealing with everyday issues and problems, including exclusively economic ones. Time, as they say, will determine how effective my actions in this job have been.

[Question] You are known to have resolutely opposed the merger of Goskomleskhoz and Minlesbumprom in the past. What is your attitude to this problem now?

[Isayev] I still believe that Goskomles should be the sole master in the forests on behalf of the state, while Minlesbumprom should lease them from it. In a comprehensive way, this should include timber and all other forest riches. In our national economic practices of today, our approach to the forests should run along ecological lines in the first place and along consumer lines in the second. Apart from tree felling, the loss-sustaining mechanism has bled white all types of forest management. Overcutting of timber in calculated wood-cutting areas has become a commonplace and everyday occurrence.

I think that the "enlarged" industry is incapable of taking care of both forest restoration and an ecological balance. Each department should take care of its own business.

IZRAEL, Yuriy Antoniyevich

Chairman of the State Committee for Hydrometeorology

[Text] Born in 1930, Russian. Graduated from Central Asian State University with a degree in physics. Doctor of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, Professor, Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences. His career ranged from union scientific associate to the director of the Institute of Applied Geophysics of the Main Administration of the Hydrometeorological Service of the USSR Council of Ministers and then that of the Chief of this Administration and Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Hydrometeorology and Environmental Control. Chairman of the USSR Committee for Hydrometeorology since 1988. Member of the Central Auditing Commission of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] The session of the USSR Supreme Soviet pointed to the need to redefine the Committee's objectives in view of the present-day demands. Do you agree with these proposals?

[Israel] Yes, we have elaborated a strategy of developing the USSR Goskomgidromet and its work, taking into account what has been accomplished during the period of perestroika, new duties and practical and scientific ideas. It provides for such main directions as improving the

system of observations on the basis of scientific and technical achievements, setting up a disaster and emergency service, including the use of universal space systems; providing better information to the national economy and the population; active influence of the hydrometeorological and geophysical processes, such as artificial rainfall, combating hail and avalanches; the solution of the most difficult classic problems involved in weather forecasting. These include the identification of subtle but dangerous effects. For example, climate modification and the risk to the ozone layer give us no time for thinking things over and dilly-dallying. We should expand our ties with foreign countries, hold emergency hearings in the USSR Supreme Soviet, adopt respective laws and start acting.

[Question] In working on climate and ecological forecasts, the USSR Goskomgidromet comes into the possession of unique information. Are you satisfied with how the committee's data are used in the national economy?

[Israel] Over 4,000 hydrometeorological stations and 10,000 outposts provide hydrometeorological data to us. We also receive the information on the environment. In one year, we prepare over 15 million various forecasts, memos and estimates. All this is analyzed and sent to the organizations concerned.

The committee signed 19 agreements with various ministries and agencies on the transfer and use of detailed information in such key sectors of the national economy, as agriculture, power engineering, water conservation, transport, for the safety of air flights, and so on. But we think that its practical applications are not sufficient yet, which is the common concern both for our Committee and for the consumer Ministers and that we need closer ties with them.

Our information is essential for any feasibility studies in construction, especially on a large scale. I am convinced that we should formulate our assessment and demands regarding such projects to provide for their ecological "stability".

[Question] What measures do you intend to take to reinforce glasnost in the work of the committee, a wider publication of information which is of interest to all Soviet people?

[Israel] We have again approached all our local organs with an instruction to publish all data on environmental protection and pollution, not just hydrometeorological information in mass media. These data have been already published in 220 cities in the country. A TV monitoring station has been set up at the Committee to transmit the necessary reports. A press group is being put together. This will allow us to considerably broaden the publishing of our data.

KAMSHALOV, Aleksandr Ivanovich

**Chairman of the State Committee for
Cinematography**

[Text] Born in 1932. Russian. Graduated from the Moscow State University with a degree as a history

teacher. Member of the CPSU. Started as a school teacher, then performed Komsomol work, where he advanced from a department head of the Orekhovo-Zuevo VLKSM Gorkom (Moscow Region) up to the Secretary of the VLKSM Central Committee. Section head at the Cultural Department of the CPSU Central Committee since 1970. Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Cinematography since 1986.

[Question] You worked as Chairman of the State Committee for Cinematography in the previous government. You played a direct role in restructuring. Why do you think radical changes in the movie business do not please the viewers with the films that would come as revelations or discoveries?

[Kamshalov] The movies meeting topical public needs and spectators' expectations should be regarded as the main indicators of drastic changes in cinema. I agree that they are few (perestroika itself is only three years old though), and I think that "revelations" and "discoveries" are still ahead. Even now I can single out a number of striking, unorthodox, talented works carrying a strong civic message which won many spectators' hearts. Many of them won international recognition. Our films received over 120 prizes at foreign film shows in 1987-1988, which I do not think we should discard. Soviet cinematography has a strong creative potential; young gifted blood is flowing and I am confident that the screen will bring us a lot of joy in the near future.

[Question] Does not economic accountability in cinema create a danger a priori of us becoming taken with commercial, box office movies? Some recent flicks seem to confirm these misgivings, as sex, superman's cult and violence are becoming standard fare on the screen? What is your opinion?

[Kamshalov] Cinematography is a very specific phenomenon in the arts and public life, where creativity and technology, high spirituality and "base" economic demands intertwine. It would not be realistic to ignore this. Yet let us first define commercial cinema, box office success. We can say that such a danger does exist if we take the movies of mediocre or of plain low esthetic value, deprived of a meaningful moral message and catering to the most undemanding tastes.

But let's try to look at the problem at another angle. If cinema stops being commercial as far as its profitability goes, if movie theaters become empty, what new model of cinematography and what social impact of cinema can we be talking about? So, I would not pit high creativity against broad popularity, criteria of spirituality against market demands as mutually exclusive categories. I see nothing wrong if part of the proceeds from an entertaining movie is channeled into financing an experimental project or an interesting debut, which are not guaranteed to become box office hits.

[Question] What do you think defines the type of relationship between the USSR Goskino and the USSR Film-makers' Union? Is complete harmony possible?

[Kamshalov] I beg your pardon, but why do a government and a public cinema organization need a complete "harmony"? It should be pointed out, though, that the committee and the union did display nearly complete harmony in appraisals and actions several years ago, which has been stopped to everyone's benefit. Our relationship with the USSR Filmmakers' Union is governed (after we passed through a period of tension) by the style of comradely cooperation based on a clear understanding of the common goals and objectives in developing Soviet cinematography. This does not rule out sharp debate, of course.

[Question] Which things do you think could raise the professional skills and creative potential at republican film studios?

[Kamshalov] I would not underestimate the professional skills and the creative potential at republican studios. Moreover, I think that individual ethnic cinematographies are building up their creative potential, more actively sometimes than this is being done at the center. Production potential and the material and technical base is another matter altogether. The situation is clearly unsatisfactory both at the center and in the republics. The wear and tear of the main means of production in our cinematography amount to 70-80 percent, and in general its material and technical facilities resemble a poor man's rags having a few expensive patches on them in the form of imported equipment. The truth is that the industry cannot overcome its technical backwardness on its own in a short span of time. I believe that cinematography has the right to claim a portion of the means allocated for cultural development.

[Question] What is your favorite movie? Director? Actor? Can't a favorite master become a pampered pet? Does the USSR Goskino have barriers to nepotism, favoritism and wire-pulling.

[Kamshalov] I'm sorry but I am not answering the first part of the question because our personal preferences are intimate, but preferences in cinema are doubly intimate for me...I do not think that we need barriers to favoritism and wire-pulling at all, if we talk about genuinely talented people, especially young. To be serious, I think it is next to impossible to use organizational measures in defining one's attitude to a creative individual (I agree that being a pampered pet can only hurt a talented person). Only one's moral attitude to business, a developed artistic taste and consciousness can help an administrator and production organizer in his work in the movie industry, without overstepping a dangerous borderline.

KATUSHEV, Konstantin Fedorovich

Minister of Foreign Economic Relations

[Text] Born in 1927. Russian. Graduated from the Gorky Polytechnical Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. Started as a designer at the Gorky auto plant, then switched over to Party work; was elected second secretary of the Avtozavod CPSU Raykom, secretary of the plant

Party committee, First Secretary of the Gorky Gorkom and Obkom of the CPSU, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. Later was Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, USSR Permanent representative with CMEA, USSR Ambassador to the Republic of Cuba, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Foreign Economic Ties. Minister of Foreign Economic Relations since 1988. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Now virtually anybody—from ministries to cooperatives—has the right to enter foreign markets. Do we need the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations under such conditions?

[Katushev] The question might have been prompted by an idea that foreign export and import markets are in the grip of complete anarchy. This is not the case. Integration processes have become part and parcel of world economy now. On the foreign markets, they become evident in clear-cut "rules of the game," which do not rule out stiff competition. Those having professional marketing skills become the winners there. Protectionist measures are also taken. That is why virtually all developed and developing countries have specialized government bodies to manage and regulate foreign economic activities. Our country cannot be an exception. We cannot exist without a national body that would create favorable conditions facilitating the entry of Soviet exporters in foreign markets. It is essential to fine-tune the mechanism of coordinating their activities step by step to rule out a situation similar to the one in Krylov's fable about a swan, a lobster and a pike who undertook to pull a heavy load [all of them pulling in opposite directions]. Somebody, for example, should formulate foreign economic plans, regulate the export of goods of state importance, which amount to 52 percent of our exports, and import goods using centralized resources. We need to coordinate the work of all those who build plants, enterprises, thermal power stations and other projects abroad, and pursue military and technical cooperation with socialist and a number of developing countries. Our Union ministry forms an important element of the system performing these functions.

[Question] You are known to have proposed measures to overhaul our approach to foreign economic ties two decades ago. What was the fate of those proposals and which of them do you think are being implemented in the period of perestroika?

[Katushev] Together with other experts, I took part in formulating proposals to set up an economic and monetary and financial mechanism of cooperation among CMEA countries, bringing direct producers as close to the foreign markets as possible. All those things can be implemented in full measure only now. Over 15 years have been lost. We have to bridge the gap. I think that the main attention should be focussed on the following: we should achieve consensus in understanding the principles and methods of solving those urgent tasks which determine the development of our country's foreign economic ties. So far we lack such consensus.

[Question] What do you appreciate in people you work with? Do you have any hobbies?

[Katushev] I appreciate dedicated work, loyalty to civic duty, evenness, and respect for people. My hobbies include theater, interesting books and an art exhibition. But I have very little time for them: my working day as a minister lasts over 12 hours.

KIRICHENKO, Vadim Nikitovich

Chairman of the State Committee for Statistics

[Text] Born in 1931. Russian. Graduated from the Moscow State University with a degree of a political economy teacher. Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor. Member of the CPSU. Held teaching jobs, then conducted scientific work as the head of the Economic Research Institute of the USSR Gosplan, combining this position later on with that of head of the department for perspectives of economic and social developments of the USSR Gosplan. Head of the economic department of the Administration of the Affairs of the USSR Council of Ministers in the past two years.

[Question] Our statistics have been sharply criticized for a long time both at home and abroad. The reasons are well-known. The USSR Goskomstat kept too much under wraps for too long. Are you going to put an end to this?

[Kirichenko] Yes, we are planning to do this. Statistics are meaningful only when they are one hundred percent reliable and correct. I would honestly say that this is not an easy thing to do. We should end the practice over the scores of years when the statistical data were mostly used to show our achievements. I think that the statistics should not only allow for an objective evaluation of the situation but have a critical orientation, without bypassing difficulties and negative phenomena. In other words, give an all-round and true picture of the condition of our society.

[Question] Are you sure you can succeed?

[Kirichenko] I am confident, because we have the main condition, i.e., the desire of the political leadership to have objective indicators and not those it would wish to see in order to validate its actions. I recall a small statue of the Venus de Milo that I saw in the study of a prominent Soviet statistician, Professor A. Ya. Boyarskiy—the statue has wide open eyes but has no arms. This could not but invite a comparison with our statistics—they have no arms either, so to speak. The situation is radically changing now and the statisticians' hands are free. This is an earnest and a guarantee of the statistical data becoming true to life.

[Question] What are you going to do first in your new job?

[Kirichenko] Enhance the statistics' analytical functions. We are interested not just in registering and deriving certain numbers, but the conclusions containing an element of forecasting and possible consequences. We should pay serious attention at the same time to improving the methods of statistical work, enlist the help of science and master new types of statistical observations and develop

technical facilities. Social statistics should be given top priority. We have to formulate such indices, which have not been used, as the minimum living standards, the volume of consumption of material goods and services by the population, the effect of price changes on the people's well-being, and others. And we should also make the statistical information more open. The last step may prove to be the most difficult for the statistical organs, since it undermines their monopoly. But this psychological barrier should be stepped over to get the job done.

[Question] You worked in the apparatus of the USSR Council of Ministers lately. Did you deal with statistics there?

[Kirichenko] I am an economist and I have always been associated with it. It provides an in-depth idea about economic processes. As a scholar, I made calculations for such important reproduction indices as national wealth, the problems of balancing national economy.

[Question] What made you quit science and take a government job?

[Kirichenko] I would assume that it was a logical thing to do, given my scientific work, during which I accumulated many theoretical ideas and methods. It was only natural to want to implement them. So, I was offered the job as head of the department for the prospects of economic development in the USSR Gosplan when work was started on formulating the concepts of the country's economic and social progress till year 2005. This motivated me to drastically change the nature and conditions of my work, my entire life.

KOKSANOV, Igor Vladimirovich

Minister of the Shipbuilding Industry

[Text] Born in 1928, Russian. Graduated from the Leningrad Ship-Building Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked at the enterprises of the ship-building industry in Leningrad and the Khabarovsk Territory. Was deputy head of the main directorate of the USSR Ministry of Shipbuilding Industry, head of sector at the CPSU Central Committee, First Deputy Minister of the USSR Shipbuilding Industry. Minister of the USSR Shipbuilding Industry since 1988.

[Question] Igor Vladimirovich, in addition to building warships for the USSR Navy, you are in charge of building ships for the Ministry of Merchant Marine, Ministry of Fisheries as well as river boats. Their representatives criticised you sharply at the USSR Supreme Soviet for the dearth of home-built vessels in all basins...

[Koksanov] Under conversion, our ship-building facilities which turn out up-to-date warships and submarines can increase the production of transport, passenger and fishing vessels. Together with the USSR Gosplan and other agencies we are working seriously along those lines at the request of the USSR Council of Ministers. We are converting some plants to manufacture nonmilitary ships

only. Due to a long ship-buildig cycle, the ship-building situation will improve dramatically only by the end of the 13th five-year plan period.

[Question] Along with other defense industries, the Ministry of Ship-Building undertook to provide upscale processing equipment to the agro-industrial complex. What is your program and what are the first results?

[Koksanov] We are obliged to solve the problems which what used to be the USSR Minlegpishemash [the Ministry of Light and Food Machine-Building] and the USSR Gosagroporm failed to accomplish together. As many as 900 items of new technological equipment worth over four billion rubles have to be redesigned virtually from scratch and sent to the processing industries, and a batch production is to be modernised. These include systems and equipment for the flour-and-cereal, combined fodder, wine, fish and tea industries.

I can firmly say that we shall raise the standards of equipment for agro-industrial complex's processing industries up to the world level, knowing the possibilities of our industry.

KOLESNIKOV, Vladislav Grigoriyevich

Minister of the Electronics Industry

[Text] Born in 1925, Russian. Graduated from the Voronezh Polytechnical Institute with a degree in radio engineering. Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Worked at the enterprises of the radio electronics industry. Held the positions of general manager of the "Elektronika" Voronezh production association, First Deputy Minister of the USSR Electronics Industry. Minister of the USSR Electronics Industry since 1985.

Member of the CPSU Central Committee. ***

[Question] Vladislav Grigoriyevich, you have been seen rubbing shoulders in the lobby of the USSR Supreme Soviet with the candidates to the position of the USSR Minister of Radio Industry and the Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Computer Technology and Information..

[Kolesnikov] We are bound by the ties of everyday work otherwise. Today the Ministry of Radio Industry is a major user of our components. Do you remember V. I. Shimko answering the question, "How does Minradioprom hurt Minelektronprom and how does it help it?" He said that if we want to have electrification of the country, we should first of all produce an abundance of electronic devices, the same way we had metal during the epoch of industrialization. Boris Leontiyevich Tolstykh, GKVTI Chairman, subscribe to this point of view.

Urges, incantations and shouting cannot solve our inter-industry problems. But we have a creative "discharge" when science and engineering thought fuse together at the junction of different industries. This was the case when we built Soviet super-computer with one billion operations per second and other new equipment for the defense technology, medicine, and agriculture. We shall continue

to encourage the work of ad hoc creative collectives, especially young ones, in the future as well.

It is for workaholic talented young people to take on microelectronics and its objectives. I am saying this for the sake of those who is racking brains now at home or in school over their first electronic circuit.

[Question] When did the Minister of Electronics Industry become infatuated with electronics for the first time?

[Kolesnikov] It was at the age of 9 when I assembled my first radio with a silicon detector. I became engrossed in electronics technology immediately after a transistor had been invented. The word "tranzistor" means in English "the one transferring resistance" by the way. So, I run into resistance almost every day in science and in life. We were castigated eight years ago for starting work on Soviet-made video equipment, and now we are spurred into producing more and more...

[Question] Not only more, but better too. We are lagging behind in many priority directions of radio electronics. How can this laggardness be overcome?

[Kolesnikov] Unlike other industries, the microelectronic secrets are kept close to the chest in the developed countries. No money can buy a license for materials, or a technology patent. As to the defense tasks, we provide everything necessary, while we lag behind the USA and Japan considerably in the output of electronic components for the national economy. Production volume is our main scourge. Although our industry has achieved a rate of growth higher than any other (117.5 percent in 6 months!), it should be 1.5-2 times higher than that. To achieve this, we should replace new equipment every two-three years, and this can be done only on the basis of a very powerful electronic machine-building. Of course, our country should boost the output of super pure materials, without which the process in electronics is not possible at all.

KOLPAKOV, Serafim Vasilyevich

Minister of Metallurgical Industry

[Text] Born in 1933, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Institute of Steel and Alloys. Doctor of Technical Sciences. Worked at the metallurgical enterprises in Asha, Lipetsk. Was director of the Novolipetsk metallurgical plant, Minister and First Deputy Minister of the USSR ferrous metallurgy. Minister of the USSR ferrous metallurgy since 1985. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Serafim Vasilyevich, the ferrous metallurgy was in turmoil for four five-year periods. Production targets were failed and supply contracts were breached. The industry's indebtedness to the state was growing. All of a sudden metallurgy workers made a dramatic leap in three years. An end was put to backwardness of many years, debts were paid, five-year targets are overreached every year. Comrade Minister, can you tell us the secrets behind this economic miracle?

[Kolpakov] I do not have any magic means. We started perestroika with the teaching of the ABC of economics to all leaders in the industry, Ministry officials and enterprise general managers. Many directors were miffed at the outset - why should we sit for exams at our age? Some of them even had to take exams twice. But now we know real well who is using what kind of levers in production - those of administrative command or economic ones.

Following a detailed examination of the industry's problems, the board outlined priority programs and the economic machinery to fulfill them. Industry councils and commissions headed by deputy ministers exercise a monthly control over the implementation of 35 such programs.

During the second year of complete economic accountability, we began to produce more with fewer people, for the first time ever in industry's history. The number of people in the industry was reduced by 92 thousand, while the rate of increase in labor efficiency in 1988 exceeded the level set for the end of the five-year period. The industry paid off all its debts. One billion rubles in profits above plan were received in 1988 alone.

[Question] An industrial super complex, without a parallel in world practice, was created following the merger of the Ministries of Ferrous and Nonferrous Metallurgy. How do you see the tasks of a new USSR Ministry of Metallurgy?

[Kolpakov] To describe its scale and complexity in brief, I should only mention the fact that the industry will produce about 80 billion rubles' worth of goods. This is about one tenth of the country's industrial output.

Most of the functions performed by the Ministry in organizing cooperative ties in current production will be delegated to enterprises themselves or the structures they voluntarily established, such as branch and regional concerns and associations with which the Ministry will cooperate through economic means. Our concept of further development of the metallurgical industry envisages a stabilization in the production of ferrous and nonferrous metals in the next five-year period, and their gradual reduction starting from 1995. This will be offset through a wider line of goods and a higher quality of metal products.

[Question] You were described as a "bulldozer" leader at the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet. How true is this description?

[Kolpakov] Essentially, metallurgy is a huge hot conveyor. Complex 24-hour work in the industry enterprises is possible only in conditions of a high degree of responsibility, mutual aid and discipline. These conditions develop a firm and pushy character in metallurgists. If these individual traits are referred to, the Minister cannot exist without them.

KONAREV, Nikolay Semenovich

Minister of Communications

[Text] Born in 1927, Russian. Graduated from the Kharkov Institute of Railway Engineering with a degree in railway operations management. Candidate of Technical Sciences. Started his working career as a station engineer, worked as station deputy manager, department head for traffic service, then First Deputy and head of the Southern railroad. Deputy and USSR First Deputy Minister of Communications from 1976 and USSR Minister of Communications since 1982. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Nikolay Semenovich, you faced not an easy procedure of nomination for the minister's position. What made you continue fighting for minister's portfolio after the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet had made a negative decision at the preliminary stage?

[Konarev] In your question it would be more correct to say not "procedure" of nomination, but a "process" which was very difficult for me. It would not be an exaggeration to say that it riveted the attention of our public. I know that many appeals in my support were sent to the USSR Supreme Soviet, USSR Council of Ministers and to USSR People's Deputies. Railroad workers were especially active.

All these appeals were keynoted by a request to review my candidature again. Understandably, that fact alone put high demands on me. Besides, a strong support provided by the collectives of railroads, Collegium of the Ministry of Communications, ordinary workers at the railroad transport enterprises inspired me to continue working in the same responsible and demanding manner. This responsibility for the job entrusted to me has increased even more after the USSR Supreme Soviet had confirmed my nomination as Minister of Communications, which I regard as an exceptionally high confidence placed in me by the Party and the people.

[Question] People using railroad services send more and more complaints every year. One gets the impression that transport is operating at the limit of its capacities. Is there a streamlined program of organizational and technical measures to take it out of this dead end, so to speak?

[Konarev] First, I see no dead end. On the contrary, I see many reserves that yet to be tapped. It does not mean however that the railroad transport is working smoothly. Its strained operation is well known. We receive several times more produce per one kilometer of railroad than the Americans and all advanced countries do. We are firmly the world's second in labor efficiency, with the transportation unit costs being the lowest.

I want to emphasize that we do not intend to stop here. But railroads need much help to do this, primarily in significantly strengthening their material and technical facilities. They experience rampant shortages nowadays. There is a dearth of rails, sleepers, new cars and locomotives. We are

lagging behind in automating production processes, mechanizing labor, in social and everyday spheres.

That is the reason why it is high time to adopt a national program of modernizing and retooling the country's railroads, a program that would encompass the most up-to-date Soviet and foreign achievements. A draft of such program has been drawn.

As to your question whether the Ministry has a streamlined program of organizational and technical measures for upgrading transport operations, I can say in no uncertain terms that we do have such a program. It works on the basis of achievements in scientific and technical progress and advanced technology.

[Question] Many people believe that the railroad is an area of high danger. What lessons have the Ministry of Communications top management drawn from railroad accidents?

[Konarev] This is the correct opinion. And this is the opinion of railroad workers themselves. We take this into consideration when working to ensure the safety of train traffic.

As to what conclusions we make from railroad accidents, I would like to refer to the official statistics and specific facts. The past few years have seen several major train derailments, accompanied by a large loss of human lives. These lessons were not left unheeded. The figures prove that conclusions have been made. We had 163 train derailments and accidents in 1987 and 128 in 1988. What is important is that the number of passengers who became their victims went down significantly. The number of derailments and accidents declined by 28 percent this year, and not a single passenger was killed due to railroad workers' fault.

This does not mean of course that the problem has been resolved. We have many shortcomings and we are open about them. We are paying main attention to the question of ensuring the safety of passenger transportation.

[Question] All types of initiatives used to come from the industry in the past. Those included the Belorussian method and the running of super heavy trains. Experience has proved that some of them produced mixed results and not all the consequences have been positive. What do you think about those initiatives?

[Konarev] Last year, the railroads completed the introduction of new pay scales based on the experience of the Belorussian railroad, the most significant measure in the social program under the 12th five-year plan period. This method has become an economic mechanism enabling us to solve the accumulated problems within a short span of time, and first of all, to accelerate the growth of labor efficiency and raise the workers' well-being.

New pay scales and salaries that have been introduced will be financed, for the first time in the country, out of the earnings made by labor collectives themselves. Labor efficiency has grown by 19.5 percent in the first three years

of the five-year period, i.e., the target for this indicator for the entire five-year period has been surpassed by 1.5 times. Average wages have increased by 64 rubles to reach 290 rubles. A total of 300 thousand people have been made redundant in the industry in general, including 280 thousand in the main types of work.

Personnel turnover has dropped (it is 9.7 percent now); work hours lost due to absenteeism went down two times; overtime has been reduced by 30 percent; the prestige of blue and white collar workers has been enhanced. As you can see, we have achieved impressive results.

The use of the Belorussian experience has come under fire. Derailments, accidents and some operation shortcomings have been ascribed recently to the Belorussian method. I think the situation is oversimplified.

In fact, salaries were increased thanks to improving technology, better organization of work and production, enhancing discipline and responsibility. It was not intended to reduce the number of people in charge of train traffic and safety, such as locomotive machinists, track repairmen, signal operators, car inspectors and train assemblers. The claim made by some Comrades that the Belorussian methods was introduced by order holds no water. Organizational and technical measures were worked out at each enterprise, railroad section and at the railroad in general to boost labor efficiency significantly. The Ministry and the Trade Union Central Committee allowed to introduce new wages and salaries only at the request of labor collectives. In a word, this method has become a revolutionary step on the road of restructuring in the operation of the railroad transport.

Now I would like to say a few words about the traffic of super heavy trains. Increasing the weight of trains is the key fixture of the intensive technology of the transportation process for the railroad men. Estimates have shown that a 100 ton weight increase in an average train allows for additional 200 trains a day and 100-200 million tons of cargo.

There should be no pause in improving the technology of the transportation process and we are obliged to constantly search for the new. We regard the introduction of these two methods as a preliminary stage in streamlining the operation of the railroads.

[Question] Recent miners' strikes were caused to a large extent by the fact that industry top management failed to respond accordingly to accumulating problems, especially social ones, for a long time. Do you keep your fingers on the pulse, for the country's railroads face many difficult problems as well?

[Konarev] True, the industry has a load of unresolved social problems. The most acute ones are the dearth of housing, schools and pre-school institutions.

The Ministry is working hard to deal with social problems, looks for additional resources to build housing and cultural and social facilities. Compared with the 11th five-year period, the volume of housing construction increased by

20 percent during the 12th period, and by 30 percent over the 10th period as a result of these measures. Over 700 million rubles have been invested in the development of the social sphere in the past five-year period in addition to the earlier allocated resources, with the money rechanneled from production facilities.

We make quite a few mistakes and omissions in the social sphere, however.

To prevent conflict situations at the industry's enterprises, we are planning to conduct an early sociological survey of the local conditions. We also held a broad preemptive discussion of the problems with the enterprises' collectives. Workers engaged in the main lines of transport have been invited to the Ministry recently, and a useful discussion took place. As a result, we managed to react swiftly by making a few effective and specific decisions which had an immediate and strong impact on the industry.

According to our economists, 292 million rubles were required to accomplish what we have done in this direction in the past few days. We uncovered such a possibility in our internal reserves, without taking a single ruble from the budget.

KONOVALOV, Vitaliy Fedorovich

Minister of Atomic Energy and Industry

[Text] Born in 1932, Russian. Graduated from the S.M. Kirov Urals Polytechnical Institute with a degree in technical engineering. Candidate of Technical Sciences. Member of the CPSU. Worked at the enterprises of medium machine-building. Was director of a machine-building plant, head of Glavk and Deputy Minister of the Medium Machine-Building of the USSR.

[Question] Vitaliy Fedorovich, the Ministry of Medium Machine-Building was one of the most secret agencies. Is it going to become more open after it has been renamed the Ministry of Atomic Energy and Industry?

[Konovalov] Not only our specialists, but scientists from the United States, Great Britain, France and other countries worked in deep secrecy 40 years ago to develop nuclear weapons. Such was the international situation. But today it is easy for you to answer your own question. One has only to read numerous press articles about our enterprises in the Urals, in Siberia, Central Asia and other regions of the country.

As to the future of the industry, the defense orientation will continue, but nonmilitary goods will be taking an increasingly larger share of production. The designing and building of nuclear steam generators is a major direction in our work. The volume of design work and bench testing is being increased to provide for the maximum safety of these installations. The plants manufacturing equipment for atomic power stations are being placed within our industry. We are put in charge of operating nuclear power stations. You can see that we deal with major tasks. The most important thing is to build a unified complex of designing, building and safely operating atomic stations.

The industry will steadily increase the volume of consumer goods, new construction materials, rare metal and rare earth products, and computers. Even the minimum degree of secrecy will only harm our job.

[Question] Your ministry will deal with such an exclusively peaceful task as the manufacture of equipment for the dairy industry...

[Konovalov] We are to step up the volume of production almost 5 times, to build and commission about 400 items of new equipment. We have already begun building small-size milk processing and milk collecting outlets. Next year we shall supply the first 150 such units.

KOTLYAR, Nikolay Isaakovich

Minister of the Fish Industry

[Text] Born in 1935, Russian. Graduated from the Far Eastern Technical Institute of Fishing Industry and Economy with a degree in mechanical engineering, the Academy of National Economy under the USSR Council of Ministers in 1980. Member of the CPSU. Began his working career as an engineer at a fishery in the Maritime Territory. Worked in Party organs and then worked at various units of the "Dalryba" association. Head of the department for active sea fishing at Primorbybprom since 1977. USSR Minister of Fisheries since 1987.

[Question] The industry emerged in recent years as the world's second largest producer of general sea products. But we experience shortages still. What's the matter?

[Kotlyar] True, it should be said outright that buyers' demand for fish products is far from being satisfied. Although per capita we have about 18 kilograms of it, which is close to the consumption norm.

It should be borne in mind that we have treated fish as a product to offset meat shortages. Therefore, the actual demand for it is much higher.

Fish reserves in seas and oceans will not grow. That is why the solution lies in using the entire catch as efficiently as possible. What I have in mind is building up extra capacities for a deep fish processing, and increasing the output of ready-made products. The Ministry has formulated a program of achieving a qualitatively new level in the next few years. We have launched the construction and modernization of enterprises manufacturing fish processing equipment. Together with Finnish firms, we are building a refrigerator assembly plant. So, we have made some progress.

[Question] Do you think it is more profitable to catch fish in international water areas or to develop the industry using internal water bodies?

[Kotlyar] The fish caught in the ocean costs 3-4 times less than the one bred in ponds. But the output of pond fish will rise steadily considering the population's demand. A third direction is possible which will fill the shelves with the most valuable fish products. I mean marine culture, i.e., breeding fish and sea products in the coastal waters of the

seas and oceans washing the shores of our country. The potential of this direction is projected at 800 thousand tons of products by 2005. That is why we intend to allocate about 800 million rubles in the 13th five-year period for its development.

[Question] You started climbing the career ladder faster after you successfully completed the Academy of National Economy. Did the knowledge you acquired there really help or was it an entry in your resume that did the job?

[Kotlyar] It is hard for me to tell. But I am firmly convinced that studies provided me with the necessary theoretical knowledge that allowed to grasp the industry's problems in their whole.

[Question] Are there other fishermen in your family?

[Kotlyar] My younger son followed in my footsteps, he is at the nautical school.

KRYUCHKOV, Vladimir Aleksandrovich

Chairman of the Committee for State Security (KGB)

[Text] Born in 1924, Russian. Graduated from the All-Union Juridical Correspondence Institute and the Higher Diplomatic School of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR. His work began in the war years as a worker at a defense factory. He was in Komsomol work, then worked as an investigator and procurator. From 1954 he was in diplomatic work. From 1959 he was in the central Committee as a referent, head of a section, and assistant to the secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. From 1967, in the KGB organs. From 1988, Chairman of the Committee for State Security of the USSR. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Have the place, role and functions of the KGB changed now, while the process of democratization of society is developing and steps are being taken toward the creation of a law-governed state, when in international relations the principles of a new political thinking are being asserted, and co-operation is developing?

[Kryuchkov] Has it changed?...This is perhaps the chief question which demands serious attention on the part of the leadership and all employees of the Committee for State Security, and most naturally, of all the Soviet public. The organs of state security are taking part in the revaluation of the position and development of the Soviet society and state. Their history and their destiny are inseparable from our society and state.

The beginning was determined by serious changes in the work of the organs of state security, the process of the reinterpretation of their place and role in the political system, and the mechanism of a socialist law-governed state is in progress. We can boldly assert that this process reflects the renewal of Soviet society and corrects the functions of the KGB organs. However, the main work is

still in the future, and notwithstanding the earnest beginning, it would be rash to assert that we have been successful in defining all the initial trends of the cardinal changes in the work of the state security organs.

First of all there needs to be very precise definitions of the lines of change. On the basis of all efforts we proposed two criteria - law and truth. The chief trend of all our efforts is concentrated on realizing the principles of democracy and glasnost, and of creative renewal of all forms of operational activities.

The Committee for State Security and all its organs are active participants in the formation of the law-governed state and the preparation of new legislation. All of their activities must be subordinate to the interests of society and the state. In such an approach, much will lie in the course of a clear understanding of the place and role of the organs of state security in the machinery of a socialist state. Precisely such an approach must define the essence of changes of the legal system in the sphere of ensuring state security, to further on the whole the strengthening of the legal basis and the clear determination of competition in the work of the organs of state security.

As far as the aspect of international relations is concerned and the principle of new political thinking and development of cooperation striking root there, it has a most direct bearing on the Committee for State Security. We are proceeding from a new tenor of international relations - be absolutely precise in determining the goals to be pursued by the organs of state security in relation to the foreign policy activity followed by the Soviet state and apply all its efforts towards contributing to the implementation of its foreign policy course. This means that the forms and methods of work followed by the KGB organs and the functioning of the entire system of ensuring state security should be based on a new international situation and facilitate a peaceful constructive dialogue between different countries and strengthen the positions of the Soviet state in its peace efforts.

It is the duty of the Cheka and the duty of the state security organs to obtain objective information, know precisely the obtaining world situation, the plans and aspirations of the leading Western powers with regard to the Soviet Union and to possess information enabling one to make the optimum decisions.

The Soviet state is expanding its foreign cooperation in the field of economics, politics, culture and sports. I am deeply convinced that the state security organs favor the development of this process, arranging contacts and ties with the special services of capitalist and developing countries for the sake of achieving such common goals as the interdiction of terrorism, drug business, contraband and the solution of other tasks of fighting for human honor, dignity and rights.

I would like to put special emphasis on the need to undeviatingly observe socialist legality. We are actively involved in the elaboration of the control mechanisms that would guarantee legality in the activities pursued by the

state security organs. It essential to elaborate and pass without delay a Law on state security and the Statutes (or the Law) of the USSR Committee for State Security. This will require time of course, but these legal acts will provide answers to many questions of concern to the Soviet people.

[Question] How can one combine the traditional closeness and secretiveness, typical of the state security organs, with the requirements of glasnost in their work?

[Kryuchkov] It appears at first sight that secretiveness and clandestinity, typical of the state security organs, on the one hand, and glasnost in their work, on the other, are the categories that are hard to combine, like water and fire. True, this is a problem. But if we approach it in a rational and constructive way and, most importantly, realize that we need both the former and the latter, the answer should be found in the dialectics of their reasonable correlation.

One can say the following in a nutshell. We need clandestinity since the work of the state security organs cannot be done efficiently otherwise. We cannot disclose all our methods of work and the means available to us to the adversary. In this way we shall arm those who has taken a criminal path. On the other hand, we need glasnost, i.e., reliance on the public. The Soviet people should have as full an understanding as possible of the essence and nature of work performed by the state security organs, of whom they are fighting against, of the results and of how it affects the situation in society and the protection of its interests. Such an approach cannot but help the state security organs more actively rely on the support of the working people, count on their help.

Glasnost is a condition under which the Cheka people and the working people are constantly drawing closer to each other. This is the only ground that can win Cheka collectives popular respect. And we need this badly - the Western mass media constantly launches vicious calumnious attacks openly vilifies the KGB. It blows your mind what they write about us! It is high time we have got used to it, but we are concerned. Unfortunately, the general picture does not always change even though our counterpropaganda tries to dispel it and clarify one issue or another. As you may understand, other forces, not always loyal to the Soviet Union, act as masters abroad. When one comes across a kind attitude towards the state security organs on the pages of mass media in our country and an objective evaluation of the things done by them, this helps the Cheka people of a new generation and gives them moral support, but most importantly instill confidence that the society understands and needs the organs of state security.

The Collegium of the Committee for State Security has formulated a comprehensive program of broadening glasnost in our work. We shall continue to follow this path in the future as well.

[Question] Judging by your biography, you worked with Yu.A. Andropov for a long time, since the 50s. How do you evaluate his contribution today to ensuring country's security and to preparing perestroika?

[Kryuchkov] Yes, I happened to work with Yuriy Vladimirovich Andropov for almost 30 years. I would like to say first of all that Nature richly endowed that man but he was not spoiled by life. He became orphaned at a very early age. He had to add one year to his age in order to get admitted to a production technical school. Fortunately, his physique and a stamp of hardship on his face rose no suspicions on that score. Natural wit, good human qualities and profound respect for the people around him made him popular in any collective.

Yu.V. Andropov was a self-made man, who advanced thanks to his work and his intellect. He has exceptional memory and an aptitude for foreign languages. In his spirit, he was a person with the heart of a broad internationalist. He had many disciples both in the Soviet Union and in other countries.

After Yu. V. Andropov became Chairman of the USSR KGB in 1967, he started a process of perestroika and renovation in the organs of state security and had done quite a lot of useful things. When Yuriy Vladimirovich became General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, he assumed his duties with a profound understanding of the need to renovate society, to establish profoundly humane principles in the entire broad range of one's outlook. You know this very well from his speeches and articles. Incidentally, I would like to point out that Yu.V. Andropov singled out M.S. Gorbachev, promised him great future and I heard him giving high appraisal of Mikhail Sergeyevich many times. When he felt that his life was coming to an end, he personally told me more than once that he saw in M.S. Gorbachev the leader of the Party. This is just in passing, so to speak, although I do not think I'm telling a secret here.

[Question] You have been in charge of Soviet intelligence for 14 years. The organization of this work apparently requires considerable resources. Do you think that they pay off? What are the end results of this activity? Do they affect politics and decision-making?

[Kryuchkov] I had the honor and high responsibility of being in charge of Soviet intelligence. I shall feel proud about it till the end of my life. There is no doubt that this is a suspense-filled field of work for the organs of state security. Intelligence means not only work but struggle. And there we losses in that struggle. I've practically never come across intelligence officers who would complain or panic. Somebody might have lost nerve, but he would control his feelings and did not show this.

I would like to tell you a lot about this service, but I think the readers will understand why I am taciturn. Do intelligence costs pay off? If I put numbers on everything that can be conveyed arithmetically, even then I have every ground to state that our country does not have a more "profitable" area than this one. I do not mean to say that intelligence services in other countries waste their money. They achieve a lot as well, capitalizing on our mistakes and our care-free attitude which is quite common with us.

We believe that the information gathered by intelligence is useful in formulating decisions, otherwise the existence of that service would have had no sense. Accordingly, the successes or mistakes in intelligence work adequately affect the nature of the decisions made. We have a serious analytical service with vast experience of work and potential.

[Question] Military production is undergoing conversion now, with combat equipment, the military transport aviation for example, used to carry nonmilitary cargo. Is this kind of "conversion" possible in the KGB organs, i.e. using their great potential in fighting organized crime, racketeering for example? What other forms are possible here?

[Kryuchkov] This is a legitimate question. It stems from a complicated crime situation in the country. Organized crime and racketeering have become dangerously widespread in many regions in the Soviet Union. If we do not take urgent measures to fight it, we can catch up with the United States of America and some other countries in the rates of this types of crime. Organized crime can assume such large-scale and sophisticated forms, that it can push the disease inside, giving it a new twist, and then society will find it much more difficult to fight this disease. The organs of the internal affairs are now on the cutting edge of fight against organized crime. But they cannot resolve the problem on their own. The KGB is getting actively involved in this, with respective structural changes made and the best trained personnel assigned for this. We intend to use the gained experience, the experience of fighting organized crime accumulated in other countries and, most importantly, draw public into this crime busting.

The means of mass media can and should make a great constructive contribution in anti-crime efforts. I think that should foment in the public mind a repulsion for the underworld, moral stigma for those young people who seek to live beyond their means. They should paint a broader picture of the logically tragic fate of those individuals who became lured by something and took to crime, but later had to pay the price of their wasted lives. Like in all our activities, we stick to the principle - fight for a human being and everything that is best in him, not fight against him.

LAVEROV, Nikolay Pavlovich

Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology

[Text] Born in 1930, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Institute of Nonferrous Metals and Gold imeni M.I. Kalinin with a degree in mining engineering and geology. Doctor of Geological and Mineralogical Sciences. Member of the CPSU. Worked in geological survey parties. Was head of department, member of the Board of the Ministry of Geology, Prorector, First Prorector of the Academy of National Economy under the USSR Council

of Ministers, then President of the Academy of Sciences of Kirghizia, Vice President of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

[Question] Nikolay Pavlovich, you devoted many years to geology, were engaged in training personnel for the highest echelon of the country's national economy, being at the head of the Academy of Sciences of Kirghizia and then as Vice President of the USSR Academy of Sciences. How did you benefit from each of those stages and what new things did you introduce yourself? How can this help in your new responsible job?

[Laverov] I think I had a good fortune in geology. I was involved in the solution of the exceedingly difficult task of providing reliable uranium supplies to the country beginning from 1947. The atomic problem was new in principle for our country and for the world practice and everything was being done for its solution for the first time ever. I did very interesting work under the guidance of such leading scientists as Academicians A.G. Betekhtin and D. I. Shcherbakov, who organized large-scale production directly at the sites of operating uranium plants and at the mines. At that stage of my life, I became a believer in solving the most difficult scientific and technical problems which looked unfeasible at first sight. I'm still in charge of scientific work carried out to provide the atomic energy with natural uranium.

The scientific and technical potential of the industry was actively established during my tenure at the USSR Ministry of Geology. Major scientific centers were set up in different parts of the country at that time, and large-scale scientific and technical programs were elaborated and carried out. They include the well-known program of a deep geological survey with the aid of a super-deep drilling, which placed our country in the leading position in this field of science.

Diverse goals, types of minerals, technology and instruments required for the study of earth bowels and the ocean resulted in business contacts with many interesting creative workers in different branches of the national economy and the USSR Academy of Sciences who contributed a great deal towards evolving a correct approach to the solution of complicated problems associated with mineral resources and other areas.

While in the Academy of National Economy under the USSR Council of Ministers, I was able to get a deeper understanding of the state of affairs in national economic management. Following the 1985 April Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, when the economic machinery was undergoing restructuring, I concentrated on the economic problems saving resources and energy. I chaired the first ever department in charge of a rational utilization of natural resources and environmental protection, tried to make economic managers aware of the pressing ecological problems facing the country.

While at the head of the Kirghizian Academy of Sciences in recent years, and as Vice-President of the USSR Academy of Sciences now, I continued to focus on the

fundamental problems of Earth sciences, development of new technologies, ecologically harmless. I tried to bring applied studies closer to the needs of production, raise the R & D standards to the world level.

Looking back, I can see important elements of learning, evolution of principles and systematic approaches to my work at every stage of my life. I will try to apply relevant experience in the USSR GKNT [State Committee for Science and Technology].

[Question] In your old jobs you obviously had dealt with GKNT more than once. What was your attitude to the organization at that time and how do you see it now, when it is in your capacity to change the Committee's work? Where are you going to start? What main idea do you intend to realize as the head of the USSR GKNT?

[Laverov] I am familiar with the work of the USSR GKNT since 1966. At the initial stage of my contacts with the Committee, I was pleased a great deal with the methods it employed to interact with branches of the national economy in dealing with the most important inter-departmental scientific and technical problems. But it became obvious in the 70s that the Committee is incapable to handle scientific and technical progress in the country as a whole.

I think that the main job that the GKNT should assume under present-day conditions is the organizational work in formulating and implementing state scientific and technical policy in the country. I believe that this aspect of Committee's to be the most important at the contemporary stage. The formulation of state scientific and technical policy starts from setting priorities. The GKNT role should be enhanced in this. The country's national economy is known to be out of tune with scientific and technical process, and therefore it is of paramount importance to upgrade economic mechanism, use of new economic levers expediting the development and application of new technologies in production.

Putting scientific and technical progress on a legal basis should be, in my opinion, the third main direction of the USSR GKNT's activity under new conditions. We should dovetail our cooperation with the commissions and committees of the USSR Supreme Soviet, prepare the laws promoting scientific and technical progress, learn how to properly build our relations with scientific and technical societies, associations and amalgamations, the country's entire public; act effectively in the new conditions of democratization and glasnost.

A better provision of our research associates and experts with information and promotion of international cooperation still remain topical problems. Among new problems that emerged is state support for long-term studies made by talented scientists, inventors and innovators as a means of fighting against the monopoly and diktat practiced by some major scientific institutions and institutions of higher learning.

[Question] You visited Armenia in the tragic days following the earthquake to organize work of monitoring

seismic readings in the affected areas. How can today's science challenge natural calamities? What new methods have appeared here?

[Laverov] The Spitak earthquake prompted the international community of seismologists to pool their efforts to solve the most complicated problems of global control over the tectonics and earthquake forecasting. A global network of seismic stations and national seismic networks are being established; an array of methods needed to make forecast is being worked out.

Soviet scientists also make a major contribution to the solution of the problem. The USSR Academy of Sciences has come up with the methods to pinpoint a location of a powerful earthquake several months before it strikes, to carry out anti-seismic measures in the area and to conduct detailed research in local zones in order to specify a possible time and power of tremors.

The electric and seismic sounding out of the prone areas, including the use of powerful MGD generators and seismic vibrators, is becoming a genuine means of monitoring artificial and natural technogenic earthquakes used to build water reservoirs, to develop oil, gas and other deposits. Forecasting includes the detection of an abnormal behavior of natural seismic noises and of ionosphere phenomena, of animals and the emergence of pre-quake geochemical processes. This is far from the complete list of discoveries made in recent years.

The forecasting strategy developed in our country includes the monitoring of geophysical, geochemical, deformation, hydrogeological processes and development of a special observation network in all seismic areas. It is planned to establish such quake forecasting network in the next few years. It will fuse the best in domestic and international scientific experience and technology.

[Question] Do you think it is possible to remain a scientist while being a statesman? Are the two compatible?

[Laverov] I think that one can remain a scientist, but it is impossible to continue active research work on the personal level. Like statecraft, science requires full dedication to one cause at such a level.

I hope that a better information about the developments in related fields of science and the emergence of new equipment and technology will help me to guide the efforts of scientists engaged in the science of Earth and ecological problems in a more correct manner.

LEMAYEV, Nikolay Vasilyevich

Minister of the Chemical and Oil Refining Industry

[Text] Born in 1929, Russian. Graduated from the Ufa Oil Institute with a degree in technical engineering. Doctor of Technical Sciences. Worked at the enterprises of the chemical, oil refining and petrochemical industry. Worked as

general manager of the "Nizhnekamskneftekhim" production association, First Deputy Minister of the USSR Oil-Refining and Petrochemical Industry, Minister of the USSR Oil-Refining and Petrochemical Industry since 1985. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Nikolay Vasilyevich, virtually all branches of the national economy need the products of the chemical industry. But we are significantly lagging behind in the pace of its development. Shortages of many types of products manufactured by the industry are growing. The chemical workers are more strongly criticized for a deteriorating ecological situation in a number of regions...What are you planning to do?

[Lemayev] A radical technical retooling of the operating plants and a dramatic improvement in the ecological situation in the areas where chemical works are concentrated are among our top priorities. The entire chemical industry will develop only on the basis of advanced low-waste or waste-free technologies. As far as the location of new facilities, they will be allowed only following the most demanding ecological tests.

[Question] The ecological situation is directly linked to the quality of chemical products used in national economy. The country's entire transport operates today using very poisonous ethyl gas. Many countries have found a substitute to this fuel. Are our chemists powerless?

[Lemayev] We are already increasing the production of lead-free high-octane gasolines, which accounts for slightly less than 25 percent of the total output. Next year, it should reach 40 percent, and we shall stop the production of leaded gas completely by 1995.

[Question] An annual increase in simple crude oil refining was until recently the main source of meeting the national economy's demands for gas, diesel fuel and aircraft fuel...

[Lemayev] This is an extremely inefficient and ruinous method for the country. We see the solution in a deeper refining of oil products. We received over 12 million tons of valuable light oil products since the beginning of the five-year plan, using this method, without spending extra oil. The share of deep oil refining should increase from 65 to 75 percent in the next five years.

[Question] The USSR Ministry of Oil and Chemical Industry was one of the first five industries that switched over to full economic accounting and self-financing two and a half years ago. "Net produce" indices were used industry-wise for the first time. Did this allow to reduction of losses?

[Lemayev] Judge for yourself. The use of "net produce" made the financial condition of every enterprise directly dependent on its contribution to the country's national income. The energy consumption per "net produce" went down by 18 percent in the three years of the five-year plan period. And the reduction in its material intensity is five times greater than in industry in general. The combined savings on energy and materials amounted to about one

billion rubles. The financial condition of the most enterprises improved considerably.

[Question] What unresolved problems did the economic reform highlight? And how do you intend to solve them?

[Lemayev] First of all, I would single out the uncertain position of the ministries, whose functions have remained virtually the same under the USSR Law on State Enterprise. I think that in the near future the industry will see a process of independent enterprises beginning to merge into large associations, firms, companies and concerns. The relations of economic accountability will become dominant between them and the ministry as an organ of branch management. Eventually, the ministry may evolve into a state economic corporation whose relations with the enterprise and the state will be strictly economic.

MALYSHEV, Vadim Mikhaylovich

Chairman of the State Committee for Supervision of Safe Working Practices in Industry and Nuclear Industry

[Text] Born in 1932, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Power Engineering Institute with a degree in electromechanical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked at power engineering enterprises. Was director of the I.V. Kurchatov Beloyarsk atomic power plant for 14 years. Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Monitoring Safe Work in Industry and in Atomic Power Engineering since 1986.

[Question] The area of your responsibility has expanded considerably after two watchdog state committees were merged. What motivated the decision to combine those two organs?

[Malyshev] It is common knowledge nowadays that the safety of technological processes in atomic power engineering, in the chemical, coal, oil, gas and other industries has a significant bearing on the safety of the population, production personnel and clean environment.

The USSR Gospromatomnadzor, being set up through the merger of the USSR State Committee Safe Work in Atomic Power Engineering and the USSR State Committee for Monitoring Safe Work in Industry and Mining Monitoring, is called upon to provide safe use of technology. The goal has been set to increase safety standards by 1995-96 for the atomic power plants and reduce industrial injury rates down to similar indices enjoyed by advanced capitalist countries. I understand that this wording sounds strange, "injury rate on the level of world standards", but its meaning and contents are dictated first of all by concern for a person's life and health.

[Question] How do you plan to achieve this?

[Malyshev] By using the technology based on atomic energy, first by securing the safety of atomic power projects (these include control over strict observance of technological discipline, all rules and regulations and upgrading personnel training); secondly, by rebuilding the existing

facilities; decommissioning those that fall below the norms; thirdly, facilitating a purposeful elaboration of technologies and equipment ensuring safety.

An array of oversight and organizational measures have been worked out for industrial technologies. Incidentally, this determines the committee's new ideology of being not just a controller and registrar but an organizer of upgrading the safety of work in practical terms.

[Question] Where do you start? What is your program of action?

[Malyshev] We should take stock of different plants, disclose the dangers existing there and set priorities in monitoring and effectively placing forces on that basis. We shall participate in the ecological experiments undertaken by production facilities and revise ecological standards by making them more rigorous. Scientific and technical support should be provided along all directions of watchdog activity and we should clearly delineate the areas of responsibilities for all the participants in securing technologies' safety. All this will be done by establishing an atmosphere of broad glasnost, openness and providing information for the general public. We shall also bear the brunt of work associated with drafting a special law on state monitoring.

MASLYUKOV, Yuriy Dmitriyevich

First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the USSR Gosplan

[Text] Born in 1937, Russian. Graduated from the Leningrad Mechanical Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. Conducted research work, was head of the Ministry, then Deputy Minister of the USSR Defense Industry. Worked as First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Gosplan, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. First deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the USSR Gosplan since 1988. Candidate member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] The USSR Gosplan has been under strong fire for many of our economic ailments. In the meantime, the central planning body's activities are known to be undergoing restructuring, proceeding from its new role as the country's scientific and economic headquarters. What quality changes are taking place in its work?

[Maslyukov] The new economic system practically eliminates the need for the upper echelons of management, and the USSR Gosplan first and foremost, to administer an administrative command style of economic management. It is no longer necessary to promptly intervene in the affairs of ministries and Union Republics. On the other hand, the Committee will be able to deal with really vital essential economic problems, enhance its role in performing such main functions of centralized planning as setting main priorities and guidelines for the country's social and economic development, and formulate the ways and means of meeting them. The USSR Gosplan will focus its activities along such main directions as the structural,

investment and social policies, scientific and technological progress, constant upgrading of the economic mechanism and maintaining the country's defense capability.

At present, Gosplan is working on a number of proposals on restructuring economic management. These include, for example, an all-out overhaul of taxation, the essence and methods of centralized planning and economic regulation in conditions of complete economic accountability of enterprises, self-financing of Republics and country's regions, formation of a socialist market and a system of anti-inflation and anti-monopoly measures.

[Question] What is new in the ideology of state planning for the 13th Five-Year period?

[Maslyukov] In elaborating the policies for the 13th Five-Year Plan period, the focus is shifting towards an economic mechanism, scientific substantiation of priorities, and the ways and means of solving national economic problems. We intend to discard to all intents and purposes the practice of setting directives and specific goals for Ministries, USSR agencies and the Councils of Ministers of Union Republics as to the volume of output and other quotas. Practiced in the preceding Five-Year Plan periods, these methods limited their economic independence and slowed down any increase in the efficiency of production. State orders and efficiency indicators for respective branches will be established whenever this is crucial.

Five-year plans will be elaborated from the bottom, from the level of associations, enterprises and organizations, on the basis of economic relationships that they would have thoroughly discussed together with the higher economic organs, on the basis of economic levers and stimuli and other primary planning data of which they would be made aware of ahead of time.

Special attention will be paid to ensure a sure-proof balance and real feasibility of the 13th Five-Year Plan. This will enable us to promote commodity and monetary relations more resolutely and consistently, proceeding from the entire gamut of property relationships with all their characteristic levers, stimuli and efforts to win the consumer.

[Question] You are known as an active proponent of a radical economic reform, decentralized management, on the regional level first of all. One encounters different, often controversial, points of view of this problem. Which of them do you reject out of hand?

[Maslyukov] The Congress of People's Deputies heard people advocating different models of Republican economic accountability in the country.

I agree that until now the central organs failed to take full account of the specific features of Republics and regions in our huge country. I think, however, that different economic management models should rest on unified principles governing the relations between Union Republics and the USSR, and, most important, on the equality of all Republics.

I would not say that I reject out of hand the concepts of economic independence of the Baltic Republics. They contain a lot of valuable in my view. I cannot agree with some individual, although principal, tenets of these conceptions.

Which positions cause most apprehensions and misgivings? The formula about the exclusive role to be played by Republican legislation. The concept of isolated property of Union Republics raising doubts about the functioning of the country's economy as a single whole. The right of Republics to exclusive property (not possession, disposition and use) of all natural resources. Making the principal means of production in industry, transport, communications and other branches Republican property. Introduction of their own monetary systems. Putting the questions of prices and taxes under the full control of Union Republics. A suggested scheme of formulating Republican and Union budgets, under which the payments made by all the enterprises in the Republic's territory would go into the Republican budget, while a Union Republic will make a general Union contribution.

I do not think that these proposals can be endorsed within the framework of a federative state and the acting USSR laws. I believe that the Guidelines of General Principles of restructuring, Management of Economy and Social Sphere creates all the guarantees for an effective broadening of their independence on the basis of self-financing and self-administration, taking into account the existing realities. The most important thing now is to take specific steps towards beginning, to run in the new economic mechanism in the Baltic area and Belorussia as early as 1990, which would allow answering some questions and dispel some doubts regarding it, entertained both by the Union organs and the Republics. This work is being done now jointly with the newly-established State Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers for Economic Reform.

The USSR Supreme Soviet will take up, at the request of the Congress of People's deputies, a draft law of the USSR "On General Principles of Economic and Social Management in Union Republics on the Basis of Self-Administration and Self-Financing." It will also discuss the proposals made by the Baltic Republics regarding economic accountability and will pass respective decisions. This is exactly the situation when alternative laws will be examined, the fact emphasized by the People's Deputies more than once.

MELNIKOV, Vladimir Ivanovich

Minister of the Timber Industry

[Text] Born in 1935, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Timber Institute with a degree in technical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Started his working career as an engineer at the Ust-Kulomles combine, headed a timber section and a department at the timber administration. Senior designer engineer, deputy and then head of the Syktyvkar mechanical plant since 1962. Held Party jobs.

Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Komi ASSR since 1984. Elected First Secretary of the Komi CPSU Obkom in 1987.

[Question] You were involved in Party and Soviets work for a long time. But you are known to have directly participated virtually every time when major decisions dealing with the country's timber industry were discussed and made. It is legitimate to ask you today, therefore, why the industry is languishing?

[Melnikov] The epithet you used to describe the condition of the timber industry jars my ear as too emotional. Unfortunately, it is true. The timber industry is lagging behind quite considerably. Judge for yourself: the share of the timber industry in the country's industrial production dropped from 6.7 percent to 4.1 percent in the past 40 years.

Why did this happen? There are many reasons of course. To sum them up, one can say that the role of the timber industry in the country's national economic complex was underestimated and the policy of forest management was mishandled as a result. The industry's production potential declined as a result of the post-war policy of setting up temporary timber enterprises, slated for operation for 25-30 years, as of a perennial shortage of resources to build new capacities.

A total of 447 timber industry enterprises and 1,344 forest settlements were closed down in the past three five-year periods. Another 100 timber industry enterprises are expected to go out of business in the next 10-15 years and the forest resources under their control to be completely cut down. The construction of new enterprises has virtually come to a halt due to scarce resources. Construction workers have performed only 39 percent of the planned work in the current year.

It should be also said that only 46 percent of logging is mechanized. More than half of the workers do manual work. The equipment supplied for timber cutting does not correspond to modern demands.

A wood cutter's hard work is aggravated by unsatisfactory living conditions and everyday services. Almost twice as little housing is built per one timber industry worker than in the country on the average. The provision of pre-school institutions, general schools, clubs, outpatient departments and hospitals is 60-70 percent below norm. Timber industry enterprises are not in a position to increase the resources for the solution of social problems because of their low profitability.

You should also add that the timber industry is one of the few industries in the national economy with a six-day working week. Then you will understand why about 20 thousand workers leave their jobs in the industry every year.

The situation in wood processing is not better either. Take the pulp-and-paper industry for example. Fifty-eight percent of the enterprises here have been in operation since the turn of the century. The equipment service life is 65

percent above the norm. Only 20 percent of all paper and cardboard making machines are on par with the world standards.

Let us see what it costs us to underestimate the industry. Compared with the 70s, the rate of growth in the deep chemical and mechanical wood processing dropped 5 times. The output of staple products per one cubic meter of timber in the USSR today is three times less than in the US, and 2.5 times less than in Sweden, Canada, Czechoslovakia and the GDR.

That is why I am firmly convinced that the restructuring of the forest industry requires new economic thinking not only on the part of the industry workers, but on the part of the government and the central planning bodies.

[Question] The choice of artificial materials is becoming wider and wider, but people cannot do without wood even today. The country consumed 200 thousand cubic meters of timber annually in the years of the first five-year periods, 350 thousand in the postwar years and uses over one million now. How do you evaluate these trends?

[Melnikov] On the one hand, they are natural. The scope of economic activity is steadily growing. But we should not overstep the mark.

Forests are a replenishable resource. But scientists tell us that we should cut only as much timber as is necessary to preserve the biological cycle of forests' lives.

In view of this, I find it wrong to follow the recent practice of large scale withdrawing timber from industrial uses, especially in the European part of the country and the Urals area, where the bulk of timber cut is consumed. Forest felling has been stopped over an area of 60 million hectares. The conserved forests rot, and tens of millions of cubic meters of timber are wasted every year as a result.

One of the ways of eliminating timber shortages in the national economy, estimated at about 20-25 million cubic meters, is to increase timber procurements up to a reasonable limit. Another way is to increase the amount of produce from each cubic meter of timber.

Besides, we need a strong, flexible and consistent state policy that would economically stimulate the enterprises that solicitously use natural resources. All industrially advanced countries have laws on secondary resources. We should also adopt such a legal document clearly regulating the rights and duties of organizations and enterprises in this area.

[Question] Do you think grounds exist for radically improving the industry?

[Melnikov] They do. But this is not enough. A program of transferring the economy to a complete economic independence should be prepared and implemented as soon as possible. The program should outline the solution of a number of cardinal problems, such as improving industry management and its economic mechanism, technical modernization and expanding the social sphere.

[Question] When is furniture going to be sold openly and when are paper shortages to be eliminated?

[Melnikov] The Ministry has drafted a program of satisfying the population's demand for furniture 100 percent by 1993 and producing the required quantity of certain widely-used grades of typing paper by 1994. A total of 11.2 billion rubles should be allocated for these purposes in the 13th five-year plan period. According to the preliminary information, fewer resources are being allocated.

What is the solution? Under the present conditions, the enterprises should switch over to self-sufficiency in foreign currency so that the larger portions of the revenues remained inside the industry. This would enable us to modernize the capacities in the timber industry complex and to boost output, bringing it up to the required volume.

MIKHALCHENKO, Aleksandr Ivanovich

Minister of Installation and Special Construction Work

[Text] Born in 1935, Ukrainian. Graduated from the Lvov Polytechnical Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked as a superintendent, head of assembly administration, trust managing director. Nominated chief engineer and then head of Glavmetallurgmontazh of the USSR Ministry of Assembly and Special Construction Work in 1973. Deputy, First Deputy Minister of this industry since 1984.

[Question] Aleksandr Ivanovich, you have worked in this industry for over 30 years. What changes are you planning to introduce in the Ministry in your new capacity and which traditions to support and promote?

[Mikhailchenko] First of all, I want to continue work on developing specialization of our organizations. This will provide for rather high technical standards and help solve complex engineering problems. I think that we should keep our enterprises mobile so that we can marshal the necessary forces at a short notice whenever necessary.

Now what has to be changed. I think that we should both perform work for capital construction and do other work for the national economy, servicing the assembled equipment for example. We should promote small enterprises and introduce leasing more vigorously.

I suggest that serious changes be made in the work of the Ministry Collegium. While it concentrated on the routine problems before, it should switch to the strategic issues. We should encourage such democratic institution as an industry council to become more active. It is called upon both to examine industry's future development but to provide feedback from labor collectives to the ministry.

[Question] What do you think about the "withering away" of the ministries?

[Mikhailchenko] The economic reform follows an immutable logic. Industry ministries will outlive themselves as economic management bodies at a certain stage. But I think that those who believe that it can be done overnight

are wrong, those who think that enterprises can adopt all the functions performed by the ministry today without any preparation and change. One should examine first of all which functions can be delegated directly to enterprises and exercised through the means that they command and which have to be specially analyzed, replenished or regrouped.

[Question] Your colleagues say that your work 12-14 hours a day. You should be in good health to do this...

[Mikhalchenko] I cannot complain yet. I have had some good physical training and pursued sports actively during my student years. I go in for sports now - gymnastics, jogging and skiing in winter. Sports helps to stay in good shape and keep working a lot.

MOSTOVOY, Pavel Ivanovich

Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Supply

[Text] Born in 1931, Ukrainian, graduated from the Kharkov All-Union Polytechnical Institute through continuing education with a degree in mechanical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked at a number of enterprises in Tomsk, Novgorod and Donetsk Oblasts. Was engaged in teaching, Soviets and Party work. Occupied the position of head of the main department of the Ukrainian Council of Ministers for Material and Technical Supply. Chairman of the State Committee of the Ukrainian SSR for Material and Technical supply since 1978.

[Question] An economic mechanism of full value cannot be established without wholesale trade in the means of production. It is obvious that this is a necessary condition, but not a sufficient one. What other problems have to be solved in your opinion to promote an efficient economic self-regulation?

[Mostovoy] One can often hear people saying that wholesale trade - one of the main elements of the market - is developing too slowly. I cannot agree with this. The share of wholesale trade increased from one to forty percent in just two years. We cannot move faster than that because other elements of the reform are lagging behind. One cannot fail to notice that financial and commodity disbalance results in rampant deficit, the accumulation by enterprises of their own and borrowed means outpaces the growth of material resources, creates a supplier's diktat, and the shortcomings of the pricing, financial and credit mechanism become apparent. All this makes wholesale trade less effective.

But wholesale is not the only stumbling bloc on the way towards a self-regulating economy. Other major problems have to be solved as well. First of all, the question regarding property relationship. Working collectives should become real owners, effectively use the means of production to turn out high-quality products. It is important to drastically change the attitude towards volume indices, since a focus on the pace of growth inevitably results in an unbalanced economy. The economy cannot

operate efficiently unless we remove lower-than-cost prices, which fail to regulate the supply and demand structure, without introducing an in-house economic accountability.

Economic regulation of the national economic management should be backed up with legal normative acts. I think the first such acts should be the USSR laws on the taxation of enterprises, on the promotion of competition and eradication of monopoly trends, on the reform of price-formation, on the state system of regulating a socialist market, and on the reform of financial and credit relations.

[Question] The Ukraine, where you worked before, gained a diverse and interesting experience in resource-saving. Do you have any plans for applying this experience in the country as a whole in the future?

[Mostovoy] The press gave extensive coverage of the Ukrainian experience in saving resources. I would like to remind that annually the Republic was saving three billion rubles. The estimates show that by expanding such practices it would be possible to release at least 30 billion worth of primary resources.

What are we going to do in the country? We are going to draw more actively on the scientific potential to create waste-free technologies; use state orders to mass produce equipment; organize regular fairs, auctions, sales in all regions of the country to sell the unused and excess commodities and materials produced by the cooperatives.

[Question] The USSR Gossnab system is a huge ramified structure in its present shape. Will it undergo any changes?

[Mostovoy] When restructuring economic management, the focus in material and technical supply has already been shifted towards the territorial organs. The state committees for supply in the Union Republics and the territorial organs have been put on full economic accountability and self-financing, i.e. turned into partners of consumer enterprises and producers. Active work is under way locally to establish an infrastructure of wholesale trade and the market for the means of production. Over 1,700 small co-op trade enterprises are in operation; 142 commercial brokerage centers have been set up under the state committees for supply in Union Republics, and in Oblasts. The network of regional shops preparing products for industrial use, service centers and renting outlets keeps growing. A wholesale trade commercial bank is under way.

In doing this, we do not seek to keep the monopoly over this "huge structure", as you said. Supply and marketing cooperatives and lessors act as its competitors. There are over 400 of the former and over 100 of the latter as of today. But this is just the beginning.

Proposals are being prepared now to establish 25 all-Union self-financing wholesale brokerages which would become the linchpin and intermediaries with full rights between consumers, producers, territorial organs and regions. Various associations, joint state and cooperative enterprises will be formed with our support; regional associations,

mutual credit societies, innovative and leasing banks and joint foreign ventures will become widespread. All these processes will simplify the structure of the USSR Gossnab significantly in the future and reduce its personnel.

NENASHEV, Mikhail Fedorovich

Chairman of the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting

[Text] Born in 1929, Russian. Graduated from the Magnitogorsk State Teachers' Training Institute with a degree as a history teacher. Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor. On completing post-graduate studies, worked as a teacher, chair head at the Magnitogorsk Mining and Metallurgical Institute for about 10 years. Then held Party jobs, advancing from the Secretary of the Magnitogorsk CPSU Gorkom to Deputy Head of the Propaganda Department of the CPSU Central Committee. Editor-in-chief of the SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA newspaper since 1978. Chairman of the USSR Goskomizdat since 1986, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting since 1989. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] You worked as editor-in-chief of the SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA newspaper for many years, raising the daily's prestige and popularity. You had to start from scratch as Chairman of the Goskomizdat. You just started to test the waters when Gosteleradio came up. Is it rational to change fields of work so drastically?

[Nenashev] To be honest, the proposal to take charge of the Gosteleradio came as a surprise since I had worked at the Goskomizdat for only three years at that time. Naturally, I was engrossed in new plans and ideas. Such a transition seemed irrational to me from the point of view of a long-term personnel policy. My experience as editor-in-chief of the national daily and my three years as a Committee Chairman seemed to have provided the main argument for choosing my candidature. In essence, Gosteleradio is a State Committee on the one hand and a large number of creative editors on the other.

[Question] Any means of mass media is believed to have made it if it has its own position and its own "image". Many people believe that Central Television is pursuing entertainment, taking to glitzy shows. What do you think about such opinions?

[Nenashev] It is a specific feature of television and its image that some people may regard as something negative, such as entertainment and glitzy shows. Television has to be showy, otherwise it does not do its job.

I think that in the process of perestroika in recent years our television has defined its political profile more concisely - it has become more topical, sharply critical and interferes in life more actively. The Central Television launched a whole number of new programs combining a strictly defined social message with showbiz elements. These include such shows as "Before and After Midnight", "120 minutes", "Viewpoint", "Good Evening Moscow",

and "Fifth Wheel". All of them are perceived and evaluated in a different manner, but they shape the present-day programming on our television and build its image.

A couple of words about my program. It boils down to an effort to make TV screen even more instrumental in helping perestroika, advancing the processes of democratic changes in our life, more vigorously combating beauracratism, conservatism and anything that blocks our movement along the road of radical change. I believe that mass media means, including radio and TV, lack an ability and skills in reflecting the creative endeavors of perestroika, setting a positive example and doing a skillful presentation of those people who invest their energy in accomplishing these changes with their own hands, fearing neither obstacles nor fatigue.

[Question] How are the relations shaping up between Central Television and local studios and committees for radio [broadcasting].

[Nenashev] I must say that we owe a lot to our colleagues working in Oblasts and republics. We intend to formulate and implement a program of integrating creative efforts of the local, Republican TV studios and Central TV, to give them an opportunity to show more of their creative accomplishments, share more of their concerns and let them show everything they want on the national air. We believe Central TV should become a rostrum for a broad nationwide communications, of far-reaching interaction of our multi-ethnic arts, literature and culture.

[Question] Many complaints have been voiced about a TV journalist having poor technical facilities...

[Nenashev] A radical overhaul of radio and TV material and technical resources is long overdue. The business suffers because our requirements for radio and TV equipment are met only in half, while home-made equipment is much below foreign standards. The USSR Gosteleradio has submitted to the USSR Council of Ministers proposals on developing the material and technical facilities for radio and TV, manufacturing communications means and establishing TV and radio networks. The main thing is to see these proposals implemented.

I would like to touch upon one more delicate matter using this opportunity provided by the "Government Chronicle." A negative image of ministers as out-and-out conservatives and perestroika opponents has been shaped in the public mind, not without an active role in this played by mass media, including radio and TV. Now that the government had passed the competency test in the USSR Supreme Soviet, we should think about ways of protecting the ministers and supporting their good intentions of working in a new style. I know how heavy their burden is from my own experience and how much they need for criticism to be supplemented with kind words.

NIKITIN, Vladilen Valentinovich

First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the State Commission on Food and Procurements

[Text] Born in 1936, Russian. Graduated from the Omsk Agricultural Institute imeni S.M. Kirov and the Higher Party School at the CPSU Central Committee with a degree in mechanical engineering. Worked as senior engineer of an educational economic administration, of a state farms trust, state farm manager, chief engineer, head of the rayon farm production management administration, chairman of rayispolkom, first secretary of Party raykom, head of the oblast farm management administration. Chairman of the Tyumen Oblispolkom since 1976. Nominated RSFSR Minister of Agriculture in 1985, then first deputy chairman of the RSFSR state agroindustrial committee. Candidate Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Vladilen Valentinovich, did you feel that the Gosagroprom system "does not work"? What do you think are the main reasons of agriculture lagging behind?

[Nikitin] Of course, I did. The fact that the initiative of primary production collectives was bound to the maximum harmed business most of all.

The command administrative system is being dismantled now and economic forms of production regulation are being introduced. The 1989 March Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee set forth a new agrarian policy which boils down to improving rural production and economic relations. The Plenum endorsed local proposals on establishing management organs along democratic lines, developing numerous form of economic management and flexibly combining different forms of property. The Gosagroprom was abolished since agroindustrial production management are being given to Union Republics.

There are several reasons behind the agrarian sector lagging behind. I would highlight the economic reasons first of all, such as an unbalanced exchange between agriculture and industry over many years, backwardness of agricultural and food industry machine building, chronic shortages of raw materials and other resources. These put a brake on the development of production capacities of the agroindustrial complex and the development of normal commodity and monetary relations, making the village a debtor begging for many material resources, so to speak.

The second problem was the corruption of Lenin's idea of cooperation, when many partners underwent excessive centralization and monopolization. How can an economic agricultural policy be considered correct, if the targets for the volume of agroindustrial produce have not been met during all five-year plan periods, and if peasants' economic interests were undermined under the burden of pressure and chronic disbalances? It means that the tactics failed to take account of real opportunities and to balance supply and demand.

This pernicious trend is still alive. The plans being drawn provide for such rates of growth in farm produce, that its volume will be balanced with the increase in population's incomes only on paper. It is a fact that monetary incomes have outpaced agroindustrial produce growth three to five times in the past few years.

Thirdly, social sphere was not given enough attention. Only 45 percent of people in rural areas have public housing compared with town dwellers. They have 2.2 times less public housing with tap water, three times less with sewerage, three times less with central heating and five times less with tap hot water. An individual dwelling has no basic amenities as a rule. It becomes clear why hundreds of thousands of people migrate to cities every year, turning from food producers into food consumers if we add lack of paved roads, low standards of trade, medical, cultural and other services.

[Question] The economy's agrarian sector has undergone through quite a few reforms. The State Commission for Food and Procurements is being set up to replace the defunct Gosagroprom. Wouldn't it be just another campaign? Wherein lies the fundamental difference from the previous reorganizations?

[Nikitin] It is hard to dispute the first part of the question.

The goal in scrapping Gosagroprom and establishing a state commission is to abolish lower units from the center's patronage. This fits the policy of expanding the rights of Soviets and reinforcing their responsibilities for meeting the population's demand for food out of their own production, as well as the principles of switching republics, territories and oblasts over to regional economic accountability and economic independence.

The commission will not deal with organizing agroindustrial production. It does not have branch departments in its structure. The commission's job is to accumulate national funds of food and agricultural prime commodities, exercise an immediate control over their supplies and rational use. It should provide an all-round economic evaluation of the agroindustrial complex's activity, map out its general development strategy and formulate large-scale national programs of boosting agricultural resources.

On the main challenges for the commission is to monitor social policies in rural areas, formulate and implement measures to improve economic management, regulate economic relations both within the agroindustrial complex and with other branches of the national economy.

This body will handle acceleration of scientific and technical progress, coordinate the work of ministries and departments incorporated in the APK and ensure their close interaction with the industries manufacturing the means of production. The state commission is charged with carrying out unified policies in land use and land management, managing vet and quarantine services, supervise inter-regional distribution of water resources and control their rational use. The commission will also take care of foreign economic and scientific and technical ties with foreign countries.

[Question] Our country has quite a few state and collective farms and leasing collectives where one worker turns out produce for 70-90 people, i.e., at the level of advanced countries. But this indicator is four to five times less in the majority of farms. How can we reach a breakthrough here so that we can feed people and with fewer producers at that?

[Nikitin] We do have such collectives and individual lessees. The main reason behind their success is a higher provision with funds and energy, professionally skillful hard work. Agriculture has to be supplied with highly productive technical facilities to make this common practice. Living and everyday conditions for our breadwinners have to be drastically improved along with better working conditions.

[Question] What traits should agrarian enterprise managers should possess, and what is your image of a modern farmer?

[Nikitin] State and collective farm managers are working under difficult conditions that require considerable physical effort and strong moral fiber. I think we should put more trust in them and take constant care of them. I appreciate high professional skills, the fundamental knowledge of agricultural production and organizing abilities. Initiative and entrepreneurial spirit displayed both in minor and major matters are an integral part of a modern manager. It is no less important for them to love their work, share the villagers' problems and concerns and do everything possible to make their life better.

Higher demands are placed today on those who produce grain, potatoes, and other farm produce. They need to display a special entrepreneurial attitude, be economical and businesslike. All these traits come to the fore to the greatest extent in conditions of lease and family contracting. That is the reason why we try to encourage these forms of labor as much as possible. If a person wants to run a family business, to lease land and production means, no obstacles should be raised for him or her. The Soviets will allocate land and the economic organizations will provide the means of production.

PANICHEV, Nikolay Aleksandrovich

Minister of the Machine Tool and Tool Building Industry

[Text] Born in 1934, Belorussian. Graduated from the Leningrad Polytechnical Institute and the Academy of National Economy under the USSR Council of Ministers with a degree in mechanical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked as a lathe operator, designer, shop superintendent at the Leningrad machine-tool building plant imeni Ilych. Worked in Party organizations, then as director of a machine-tool building plant. Head of the VPO in charge of precision machine-tools since 1980, then Deputy, First Deputy Minister, Minister of USSR Machine Tool and Tool Building Industry since 1986.

[Question] You are known to have been nominated for a Minister's position by industry representatives. Do you

intend to heed their opinion in the future too? What does the industry headquarters plan to do to create favorable conditions for the operation of an enterprise, the main production unit?

[Panichev] Yes, we should constantly work together. It is the Ministry's main concern how to create favorable conditions for the enterprise to operate in. We advocate a multitude of forms of operation within the main framework. Now 12 enterprises and organizations work under a lease, and 24 operate following the second model of economic accountability. In-house economic accountability is being introduced at 10 base enterprises that have different conditions and types of production.

Work is under way to set up a joint stock commercial bank in the industry whose job will be to use finances and loans to develop and stimulate the process of an early mastering of the output of new and highly efficient types of products, renovate the principal production facilities and to finance the construction of social and cultural amenities.

It is clear to everybody that any serious results in production cannot be counted on without improving the working people's social and everyday conditions. "Housing" and "Health" industrywide programs have been formulated together with enterprises. The volume of funds aimed at implementing them will be considerably increased as early as the current five-year period. Eighty thousand working people, including 20,000 women will see their working conditions improved.

[Question] As a base industry, machine-tool industry determines the standard of domestic machine-building to a large extent. But some industries are establishing their own machine-tool base. What do you think about that process?

[Panichev] The establishment of one's own machine tool-building in other machine-building industries is a justified process, not particular for our country alone. Such major auto companies as Fiat and Renault have their own machine tool building. I regard the building of capacities to manufacture technological equipment in other industries as one of the prerequisites to satisfy demand for such equipment as soon as possible. But intra-industry machine tool-building should concentrate on the output of very specialized equipment, manufactured in single items or in small batches. The current trend is the opposite, towards making machine tool builders fulfill single piece, the most labor-intensive orders.

PAVLOV, Valentin Sergeyevich

Minister of Finance

[Text] Born in 1937, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Institute of Finance with a degree in economics. Doctor of Economic Sciences. Member of the CPSU. Started his working career as a Rayon financial department controller. Jobs in the Ministry of Finance spanned from an economist to First Deputy Minister of Finance of the USSR. Worked as a member of the Collegium in the

USSR Gosplan. Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Prices since 1986. Elected President of the all-Union Economic Society.

[Question] Valentin Sergeyevich, you are a well-known economic scholar and a professional financier. When did you realize that the country was accumulating a tremendous state budget deficit?

[Pavlov] The late 1960s can be historically pinpointed as the period when budget deficit emerged. It seemed insignificantly low at 3-5 billion rubles from the outset. But it became menacingly large in the 70s and the first half of the 80s, namely at the peak of the stagnation period. Now we have to speak about 100 billion rubles.

A huge financial unbalance is not the only factor aggravating the situation. One should realize that this is a qualitatively new development, but the one that should be eliminated by taking the most drastic steps.

Why am I saying this? Because it appears that far from everybody is aware of the inherent social danger and of the economic nature of this phenomena. One can hear some people describing it as normal during an economic upturn. References are made to respective foreign experience. But our situation is different. The budget deficit goes hand in hand with empty shelves, unresolved social problems and low productivity of public work. Here everything is tied in a single knot, since budget woes are rooted in the economy, while its uplift and the rise in the population's well being require stable finances and a really balanced budget.

[Question] The Congress of People's Deputies was told that the country's foreign debt runs into 34 billion rubles and debt repayments amount to 12 billion rubles. Will you comment on these figures?

[Pavlov] The mentioned amount represents our country's gross debt, which in addition to the hard currency debt includes our settlement obligations, mostly to Finland (about 2 billion rubles) and the CMEA countries (around 4 billion rubles) for the construction of a number of projects in the USSR. Our foreign debt of around 28 billion rubles in hard currency includes long-term bank and commercial loans as well as deposits and short-term loans. The latter account for more than half of the whole amount. As payment schedules come, they are normally refinanced with similar new loans.

The amount of debt servicing to the tune of 12 billion rubles is given as a general indicator of our loan repayments in hard currency, including interest payments and principal payments for bank and commercial loans as well as short-term loans.

[Question] Should I understand that the Ministry that you are in charge of now sees its main objectives in eliminating the budget deficit, normalizing money supply in the country and reducing our debts?

[Pavlov] Of course, these are our main objectives. The Ministry of Finance has always prepared and administered

the budget. Since the budget is in trouble now (and this is the case), naturally the financiers are the first to account for it.

I think that the financial system has gone through one of the most difficult periods in its life. I cannot but mention the fact that attempts were made in some cases to make financiers scapegoats for all our troubles.

Now about my program of financial recovery. I intend to concentrate industry efforts on entirely new directions, so as to avoid loss-sustaining financing and loaning money, introduce self-financing and economic methods as soon as possible, increase the return on each ruble and speed up money circulation in practical terms, developing socialist commodity and monetary relations on this basis. We should finally liberate financial relations between the central and local bodies. We cannot postpone a tax reform any longer, which is to be based on equally applicable and socially fair principles. There are other aspects of our new financial policies, including international ones, and all of them are equally important.

The main goal is to move away from willful decisions to a scientifically substantiated redistribution of financial means, providing for the utmost economic and financial profit.

PERVYSHIN, Erlen Kirikovich

Minister of Communications

[Text] Born in 1932, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Electrotechnical Institute of Communications with a degree in electrical engineering. Candidate of Technical Sciences. Worked at radio engineering enterprises in Tomsk, Krasnoyarsk, and Moscow. Worked as general director of the all-Union scientific-production association of the USSR Ministry of Radio Industry, Deputy Minister of USSR Radio Industry. Minister of the USSR Industry for Communications since 1974. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Many candidates to a minister's position call the battles waged in the Supreme Soviet and its commissions "purgatory." Do you agree with such assessment?

[Pervyshin] I agree one hundred percent, with the only reservation that no sins were pardoned there. On the contrary, the nominees had to pay not only for their own mistakes, but for the errors committed by their predecessors, and of the state policy as a whole. But in general, this was a very serious test. More rigorous and uncompromising than anything else that ministers had to face before in dealing with higher bodies.

[Question] You did not feel at ease either, did you?

[Pervyshin] Naturally. The communications is one of the key industries in the country's infrastructure. We have serious shortcomings along with achievements. And they are in the public eye. If one to follow usual stereotypes, than the first thing that comes to mind is to put the blame

squarely on the industry. But the shortcomings in communications development and providing the population with information have been born out of disproportions in our entire economy. Radio electronic industries react to these disproportions particularly strongly because they are linked with dozens of contractors. So, the groundwork for progress has to be laid in order to make communications a catalyst of technical progress.

[Question] Does it mean that we cannot count on making progress in the communications industry without overhauling the economy? It looks like a vicious circle. What is the solution?

[Pervyshin] Perestroyka takes some time of course. But the reserves built up by the Ministry of Communications can serve as a point of support. The most important thing is that key directions have been chosen correctly, such as digital signal processing, fiber optics, satellite communications, specialized machine-building and targeted micro-electronics for personal use. These are the directions along which researchers concentrated their efforts and where investments were made. And today a number of our projects match world standards or are very close to them. Our goal lies in developing these areas to the benefit the population and the national economy, increase the output of equipment using all capacities, including converted ones [from military production-translator]. It is very important not to fritter away the scientific and technical potential acquired, gear it towards developing new means of communication and modernizing the existing ones. This is the only policy than can help improve the condition of communications in the country.

[Question] Doubts were raised about managing a huge industry that employees about two and a half million people...

[Pervyshin] Only if one uses old yardsticks. A decree on regional economic accountability is being prepared now, the Law on state enterprise is in force, a new decree concerning the Ministry is under way; and we should observe those laws under the conditions of the economic reform.

The merging of the former Ministry of Communications for Industry and the Ministry of Communications into the Ministry of Communications was not mechanical. Concentrating the development, production and maintenance of the communications equipment in one place will provide for the optimized planning, save resources and time and set the stage for upgrading our relations with foreign partners, to say nothing about eliminating all kind of bottlenecks with customers.

[Question] The industry has a great potential under new conditions, according to you. How did the deputies react to your program?

[Pervyshin] The deputies were not unanimous in evaluating a single program under discussion. And this is natural because too much has to be done. My program can be divided into two parts, if you may. The first is the minimum program, so to speak. It involves normalizing

the telephone communications first of all. I can only say that 4.5 residential telephones are to be installed in the remaining two and a half years of the current five-year period, and another 20 million in the next one.

In the longer term, we should establish a modern comprehensive multi-profile communications network transmitting any data to any part of the country, organize nationwide digital system with integrated services, such as telephone, teleprinter, digital data and fax, electronic mail. The development of this network should lay the technical foundation for providing information services in our society. Communications should become both fast, highly reliable and easy, changing people's work and leisure and make our people realize their creative potential to the full.

PUGIN, Nikolay Andreyevich

USSR Minister of Automotive and Agricultural Machine Building

[Text] Born in 1940, Russian. Graduated from the Gorky Polytechnical Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. Worked at the "GAZ" production association from 1958 till 1986, where his career ranged from machine-tool operator to general manager. Minister of the USSR Automotive Industry since 1986, Minister of the USSR Automotive and Agricultural Machine Building since 1988. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Nikolay Andreyevich, a number of ministries are to merge now. You already have the experience of two industries combined together. What did that experience show? Did the enterprise management system change and did new opportunities emerge for a flexible specialization and cooperation in production?

[Pugin] It is probably premature to speak about any experience that could be of value to others, because just more than six months passed since the decision to merge the ministries was taken. But I think that integration will proceed in two directions. First, given the economic reform and a growing independence of labor collectives, the enterprises themselves will be forced to look for new horizontal ties in order to raise production efficiency through marshaling combined capacities, rational division of labor and the pooling of associations' financial and material resources. Associations, concerns and other units are becoming such types of integration now. On the other hand, the ministry, focussing on the perspective issues of scientific and technical progress, will follow a policy of an overall standardization of similar parts and units and hence pave the way for implementing the economic advantages of specialized production.

[Question] What steps are being taken to resolve the main problems of agricultural machine building and to meet consumers' demands to a fuller extent?

[Pugin] It has been decided to develop over 600 new types of equipment and to modernize 250 items in the next 12 to 18 months. A large-scale intra-industry program was approved recently to manufacture equipment for leasing, contracting economic units and small-sized implements.

Considering the urgency of this task, we set rigid deadlines for the enterprises, so that the shortages in this area, especially of engine blocs and mini-tractors with an entire array of suspensions be eliminated in the next two to three years. Virtually all tractor and combine manufacturing plants, as well as such auto plants as Zil, Gas, Vaz, and Kamaz, have been involved in the solution of this problem. So, the combined industries have played a positive role.

[Question] We know that a lot is being done now to upgrade the technical standards of automobiles. For example, the production of diesel trucks is expanding. But the production of cars is not growing and people have to wait for years...

[Pugin] I think that there are grounds for optimism in the future. Up to 2.3 million cars are to be made annually by 1995 (we now make 1.3 million cars). The Zaporozhiye plant, AZLK and Vaz plants will boost their output considerably. But the main contribution will be made by the Elabuga auto plant which is scheduled to produce 900,000 Oka cars a year.

RUSAK, Nikolay Ivanovich

Chairman of the State Committee for Physical Culture and Sports

[Text] Born in 1934, Belorussian, CPSU member. Graduated from the Grodno technicum of physical culture, the Belorussian State Institute of Physical Culture and Higher Party School under the CPSU Central Committee. Started out as a school teacher, then, after the Army service, worked in the Minsk Komsomol Obkom, VLSKM Central Committee. Was deputy chairman of the central council of the student Burevestnik voluntary sports societies, head of the administration at the USSR Committee for Physical Culture and Sport under the USSR Council of Ministers, instructor at the propaganda department of the CPSU Central Committee. Deputy and First Deputy Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Sport since 1983.

[Question] The USSR Supreme Soviet turned down the first candidate for the position of the Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Sport. What is the difference between your concept of sport promotion and that of the candidate who was rejected?

[Rusak] Overall displeasure at little effort shown for the development of physical culture and sport was the main reason, in my opinion, why the people's deputies made such a decision after discussing the first candidate for the position of the committee chairman. I think that numerous statements made by the USSR State Committee about their importance remained nothing but declaration, not backed up by practical steps. The Committee has always paid attention to big-time sport.

In fact, we organize 2,500 such events every year. Around 28 thousand athletes and coaches go abroad and about the same number visits our country. It is easy to imagine that most of the efforts go into organizing these competitions and training camps. During the entire postwar period, the

physical culture organizations fought to survive. We have been united, disunited, turned into a public organ. As far as money for its development was concerned, physical culture was in the zone of the residual principle for many years.

It is evident that it is imperative to drastically change the established practice, make a turnaround in our activities.

To begin with, we should change the functions of the State Committee for Sport itself, relieve it from sponsoring international and all-Union competitions and training camps. The work of the union organs of the State Committee for Sport will be focussed on training personnel, formulation of physical education systems for the population, cultivating interest in physical culture, solving social problems, laying down legal and economic groundwork for the operation of physical culture organizations, clubs and federations in different types of sports.

To overcome society's underestimation of the role played by physical culture we mapped out draft guidelines of USSR legislation on physical culture and sport, a program of physical education of the population and other measures. They call for the construction of physical culture and health complexes using light metal and wood structures, and also creating a material basis for practicing physical culture in pre-school institutions, general schools and other educational institutions.

The output of sports and tourist goods should increase from 10 billion rubles in 1988 up to 44-47 billion rubles in 2005. Nine sports goods specialized enterprises are going up already.

[Question] Professional sport has been officially recognized in our country. Would not it slow down the promotion of mass physical culture in the country, and how can these two trends be combined?

[Rusak] Professional sports, or big-time sports as we call it, and mass physical culture are interrelated and have influence on each other. Everybody knows how the population, the press, radio and television respond to our failures or successes in big time sports. Still, it should not be detrimental to another direction since this means a departure from the genuine goals of physical culture. A change in the structure of the USSR State Committee for Sport will restore priority to mass sports and provide for a rational development of the highest level of sports mastery.

[Question] An idea is making rounds among the general public that quite a few people, separated far from this endeavor, have a hand in a small and big time sports. Are such claims justified?

[Rusak] There is a large grain of truth in this. The reasons? First of all, scarce financing for the promotion of physical culture, which depended in many instances on the wishes of one or another leader. This determined what kind of people we employed in the field. Low salaries for many categories of workers, especially instructors in methods (90-100 rubles) chairmen of the regional and city committees could not but affect the profession's prestige and

personnel selection. Because of that, we lose up to eight thousand specialists every year who leave to take jobs in other industries. That is why many vacancies were filled with people without appropriate knowledge and abilities, or plain outsiders sometimes.

We are planning measures to improve first of all the condition of workers involved in physical education and recreational field.

[Question] Which sports do you prefer and which society or team do you root for?

[Rusak] I played handball for many years, played for the Belorussian select and masters' Burevestnik (Minsk) team. I had to quit big time sports after a serious injury at the age of 25.

I continue to practice physical culture. I run 3.5-5 kilometers a day and do 10-12 morning exercises before work.

I am a fan of the USSR soccer and ice hockey teams.

RYABEV, Lev Dmitriyevich

Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the Bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers for the Fuel and Energy Complex

[Text] Born in 1933, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Institute of Engineering and Physics with a degree in physical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked at scientific and research organizations. Headed a department at the Gorky CPSU Obkom, was head of the sector at the CPSU Central Committee, Deputy, First Deputy, USSR Minister of Medium Machine-Building.

[Question] Lev Dmitriyevich, progress is unachievable without an increase in energy production, on the one hand, and energy producing capacities pose an environmental threat on the other hand. Public opinion is against the construction of atomic and hydro power stations. But everybody wants to live a more comfortable life, live better, and this is impossible without boosting energy potential. Where do you think is the solution?

[Ryabev] World experience has shown that one cannot have energy that is 100 percent harmless, chemical or any other production for that matter, nor can one reduce their environmental impact to zero. The problem is how to satisfy human needs doing the least damage to nature and to health.

Our country is lagging far behind the industrially advanced countries in the energy consumption per unit of production. This is one of the main causes of its low efficiency. The gap is especially wide in the domestic use of electric power. The use of electric energy for lighting and other household needs amounts to about 0.4 thousand kilowatt-hours annually per capita in the USSR, while it is 1.4-1.5 in the FRG, France and Great Britain, 1.1 in Japan, 0.7-1.0 in Hungary, the GDR and Bulgaria.

Serious problems have piled up in the country's energy system. The pace of atomic power development has been violated. The volume of commissioning new generating units reached a mere 7.5 million kilowatts in 1988, the lowest in many years. A large number of electric power stations and energy equipment have exhausted their operational limits. The reserves in this area are below technologically permissible ones, there are practically none.

Energy generation should be put in the limelight again. We see the solution of the country's energy problems first of all in transition to intensive economic management, based on saving resources and energy.

[Question] Energy-saving is one of the reserves. Does your program contain any new interesting ideas in this regard?

[Ryabev] We have reached a stage beyond which the economy is just incapable of meeting the requirements of the national economy in fuel and energy on an extensive basis. In the 12th five-year period, 45-50 percent of the increase in fuel and energy consumption is to be met through conservation and the replacement of organic fuels with other energy sources, while this share is to reach 80-85 percent by 2005.

An improvement in the intra-branch and branch economic structure, introduction of energy-conservation technologies and up-to-date equipment and economic management should play a key role in this. We should cut down across the board on the level of specific energy consumption by Soviet household appliances and industrial devices, which exceeds the one abroad by 2-3 times. One of the major directions of balancing the national economy's demand for motor fuels lies in the conversion of transport to gas. This will help to improve the environment, especially in big cities.

A significant reserve of energy conservation lies in increasing the use of secondary energy sources, in particular of the exhaust heat of gas compressor stations. Organic fuels should be more vigorously replaced with the energy generated by hydraulic and atomic power stations.

[Question] What is your attitude to atomic energy. What lies behind it?

[Ryabev] The optimization of different alternatives for balancing fuel and energy supply in the country and in individual regions has shown that despite the current difficulties, the role of atomic energy will continue to steadily increase in the foreseeable future. An increase in the scientific and technical standards in atomic power generation is an objective condition for this. Besides, oil and gas, whose reserves are limited, will be more and more expensive, and it is more reasonable to use them in the production of chemicals and as a motor fuel. It should be borne in mind that the burning of organic fuels produces carbon monoxide which contributes to what is known as the "greenhouse effect," and the ecological balance is seriously disrupted.

As to nuclear fuel, its reserves, considering its replenishable nature, will last in the foreseeable future. We should

more actively solve a number of problems aimed at enhancing the safety of atomic power stations and the removal of radioactive waste.

[Question] When you worked in the atomic industry, you relied on science a great deal. What are your relations with science going to be now in your new position? In which problems do you count on scientists?

[Ryabev] The role of science in developing energy is steadily growing. On the other hand, the level of science is closely connected with the scientific and technical level of the energy system itself. We have a direct link and a feedback, so to speak. Our relations with science have been and will continue to be based on these factors.

It is important to concentrate scientific potential on developing and introducing principally new technologies, laser, high-temperature, plasma, pulse, radiation, membrane, physical-chemical and geophysical, on intensifying research in atomic, thermonuclear and hydrogen energy generation and high-temperature superconductivity. One of the directions of principle will be to lay the technological foundation for pollution-free power generation. It is important to emphasize nontraditional and replenishable energy sources, for example, solar energy with the new methods of its concentration and with a high efficiency of its conversion into electricity.

[Question] For how long are we going to sell abroad non-replenishable fuel and energy? How can we reduce their exports?

[Ryabev] It is advisable, of course, to cut down on the exports of fuel and energy. This can be done in two ways. We can increase the export of finished products and reduce imports, of which grain and other foods constitute a considerable portion. We should also keep in mind our mutual commitments towards the CMEA member-countries.

A steady change in the structure of fuel and energy exports by reducing the share of crude oil and increasing the proportionate share of gas, coal and electric energy should become one of the real directions in the near future.

RYZHKOV, Nikolay Ivanovich

Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers

[Text] Born in 1929, Russian. Graduated from the Urals Polytechnic Institute. Worked at the Urals heavy machine-building plant, where he rose from a shift superintendent to manager. Was general manager of the Uralmash production association; First Deputy Minister for Heavy and Transport Machine-Building; First deputy Chairman of the USSR Gosplan. In 1982-1985, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, head of the CPSU Economy Department. Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers since 1985. Member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee.

SEMENOV, Yuriy Kuzmich

Minister of Power and Electrification

[Text] Born in 1932, Russian. Graduated from the Kharkov Polytechnical Institute with a degree in electrical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked at power plants in the Ukraine, conducted Party work, led a large production association, "Donbassenergo". Deputy Minister of Power Engineering and Electrification of the USSR in 1980-1984, then head of the department of fuel and power engineering of the Administration of Affairs in the USSR Council of Ministers. Deputy Chairman of the Bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers for Fuel and Energy Complex since 1986.

[Question] You have climbed virtually all steps in power engineering. You worked as a stoker, shift superintendent, electric power station manager, Deputy Minister. Which aspects of the industry did each new position reveal to you? What experience do you consider the most important, overriding?

[Semenov] I think my life was lucky. Upon graduation from the Institute I was sent to work in Donbas at the Zuevo electric power station. At that time, it was one of the largest and best power stations, with a well established collective, its own traditions and high work and production discipline. Much attention was paid to personnel. One had to learn how to use equipment at each work place, pass the tests, work for two weeks under the supervision of an experienced specialist, and take tests again. Only then was one allowed to work independently.

I will remember my first night as a stokeman servicing three boilers till the end of my life. I was afraid that one of them might get extinguished. But everything was okay. Each position was a step in learning a job and in a higher level of responsibility for it. I regard the experience I gained as a shop superintendent as the most valuable. It was for the first time that I felt responsible for a 400-person team, shared their concerns and upheld their interests.

[Question] What did the government work give to you? What do you think is the difference in the approach to power engineering taken by the Ministry and at the level of the government apparatus, the leadership of the fuel and energy complex as a whole?

[Semenov] The work I did in the apparatus of the USSR Council of Ministers not only expanded my knowledge but also instilled respect for government documents. It taught me to take a state - and I am not ashamed to say so - approach to the solution of problems, especially those spanning different ministries. Even the USSR Ministry of Power Engineering and Electrification, despite its versatility, approaches many questions with exclusively "ministerial" solutions, the emphasis is shifted mostly towards developing power engineering, and electrification is undeservedly sidelined. But labor efficiency is directly influenced by its energy intensity.

[Question] A new draft of the USSR Energy program is nearing completion. What do you expect from its nationwide debate?

[Semenov] I think that reasonable and universally acceptable ratios will finally be established for commissioning power generating capacities at thermal, hydro and atomic power stations. We would not be able to develop the economy without the latter two as far as fuel balance is concerned, the fact clearly delineated in the program.

[Question] Last year, thermal power stations accounted for 25 percent of all harmful air discharges. How can their negative effect be reduced to the minimum?

[Semenov] This can be done by building pollution-free thermal power stations. Progressive fuel extraction technologies have to be developed that rely on its enrichment through ash and sulfur elimination, new power generating equipment should be designed using new methods of fuel burning and a comprehensive utilization of ashes and slag waste should be ensured.

[Question] Hydro power stations also cause ecological damage. Can it be avoided?

[Semenov] We should abandon the construction of mostly large new hydro power projects on the rivers cutting across the plains. We should use mountain rivers and cascades up to the hilt, provide for minimum flooding of land areas, and strictly observe ecological requirements.

SENGHAGOV, Vyacheslav Konstantinovich

Chairman of the State Committee on Prices

[Text] Born in 1940, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Institute of National Economy imeni G.V. Plekhanov with a degree in economics. Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor. Member of the CPSU. Started his working career as a worker at the constant trust in the Altay Krai. Worked at the Institute of Electronic Management Machine of the USSR Ministry of Instrument Making, at the research Institute of Finance at the USSR Ministry of Finance, at the USSR Gosplan. Was director of the all-Union research institute of planning and norms at the USSR Gosplan, member of the Collegium of the USSR Gosplan. USSR Deputy Minister of Finance since 1987.

[Question] Vyacheslav Konstantinovich, you have been entrusted with a field of work which causes not only great interest but much concern among the general public. We have in mind the forthcoming price reform first of all. Experts offer different solutions to this problem, often absolutely opposite. What is your concept in this area?

[Senghagov] I appreciate public interest in prices and its demands towards policy in this area at the same time. In fact, prices are one of the most important economic regulatory elements. They encompass not just economic but political problems as well. The main thing in price formation is to strictly check out the adopted measures taking into account the interests of all participants in the economic process - enterprises, regions, and of the state

and population of course. I think everybody realizes how difficult it is to blend all these interests and not to lose the main fixture, i.e., the economic significance of price is a measure of work efficiency.

The following has to be considered when we take a conceptual approach. We cannot switch overnight, at one go, from one system of prices to another, considering the amount of discrepancies with real conditions of reproduction and a wide disequilibrium between supply and demand. I see the reform as a process of matching supply and demand with the help of prices of both production and technical products and consumer goods. It is virtually impossible to do this by simultaneously raising wholesale, purchase and retail prices given the present disbalances. Disequilibrium will remain even at high prices.

It should be clearly understood that price is one of the most important elements of economic regulation, but not the only one. It is essential now to calm down the market and reduce spiraling demand. We should learn how to control wages, since price increases are caused, whether we want it or not, by accelerating wage increases compared to labor efficiency. The best possible conditions should be created for increasing the savings rates so that the money does not chase any good. The securities market should be developed to this end.

Strategically, the reform should provide a more complete reflection of publicly necessary expenses, an account of a real correlation between the consumer value of different products and, consequently, the demands of the socialist market.

Price reform should not be divorced from a process of making economic decisions more democratically. We observe two trends as you know. One is towards enhancing the role played by an enterprise and the other leads to enhancing the independence of republics and the local bodies of power. As far as price formation policy is concerned, this implies a greater share of contractual prices for new products, use of commercial prices of goods sold through the state order system and introducing price limits in the system of mutual contractual relations between sovereign union republics on the national market.

[Question] Unfortunately, we are everyday witnesses to growing wholesale and retail prices. This both destabilizes the economy and results in lower standards of living for the Soviet people. What should be done to successfully defeat this trend?

[Senghagov] Indeed, we failed to keep frozen the prices of what is known as "nonessential" goods despite the policy of stable prices declared in the past. The USSR State Committee for Statistics reported that the average retail price index increased by 2.3 percent in 1988, while the prices of clothes, sheets and fabrics by 10 percent; leather footwear, by 8 percent; washers and cars, by 7 percent; meat products, by 4 percent.

Why are the prices rising after all? First, we see the operation of what can be described as an objective factor. This refers to growing wages, but in fact, higher labor costs.

But this is far from being the only factor. The living conditions for a person and his family are becoming increasingly more complicated both ecologically and from consumer point of view - and this results in a higher cost of living in general. For example, defense expenditure should be recovered as well, but these expenses have been steadily growing for years, not for one decade, and the brake has been applied only now. Besides, many industries are governed by the law of diminishing efficiency of investments, in particular due to worse geological mining conditions.

On the other hand, a volume and structural unbalance of the national economy plays a role as well. Money supply is overflowing and money is exerting a strong pressure on the price levels and dynamics.

What should be done to arrest price increases drastically through economic as well as other means? First of all, the number of consumer goods and their quality should be increased. We should resolutely promote a diversified modern production of these goods. We should lay the ground for competition and eradicate a supplier's diktat and monopoly. We should look for diversified economic forms, using shareholders' management, leasing, develop cooperative movement and promote a greater variety of the types of production. It is expedient to create a network of small enterprises in that sphere. It may include state enterprises as well, but those operating in line with genuine economic accountability and geared towards meeting consumer demand. A full use should be made of the rights granted to the financial and price setting organs in taking away unearned profits. A mechanism for their confiscation should be developed.

To be realistic though, we should admit that a certain price increase is inevitable. It is important to make this process moderate and controlled. To impart realism to our social policy, it is expedient to admit increased inflation and to develop anti-inflationary social protection measures for the lower income groups of population.

[Question] You are well versed in the economic systems and economic reform experience in many socialist countries. Which elements could we use and which should be resolutely rejected?

[Senchagov] I do not think we can make successful economic strides today without measures taken against the steps taken by our friends in socialist countries. We should consider the strategy of the experience gained. It boils down to a wider use of commodity and monetary relations in all countries and the laying of foundations for the operation of a socialist market. Prices play a significant role in this process. We find very important experience in using contractual prices, price freeze for certain categories of goods to curb spiraling inflation, use of different prices for the same consumer goods to provide social protection to the people with minimum incomes.

We find attractive the experience gained by Czechoslovakia and the GDR in a purposeful use of wholesale prices to enforce a stronger resource saving regime. For example,

wholesale fuel and energy prices increase by two to four percent a year, while the end product prices do not increase. This makes processing industries use raw materials more efficiently. It is worthwhile to take into account the negative experience of an overall increase in wholesale prices and steep rises in retail prices. Such a mechanism accelerates price growth because as a result of greater independence, the enterprises initiate higher prices, although within their competence, in addition to the so called legitimate price increases.

[Question] You were engaged in science writing for a few years as a journalist. Do you plan to use your skills now at time of glasnost, when it is essential for every high-ranking leader to have his own style and to be able to set forth his position in a competent, convincing and vivid manner?

[Senchagov] They normally engage in science writing after the font of scientific ideas had dried up. I am trying to follow two lines - develop offbeat scientific ideas and popularize them in the press, make them understandable for the general public interested in economics. I do not shun responsibility for working on the documents concerning state enterprise and stocks, although these ideas are known to have a few significant shortcomings when applied in practice. Progressive economic forms emerge gradually, not overnight.

One more consideration. It is difficult to stick to one's individuality in scientific coverage of various problems while holding a high government position. This high position seems to push you down, so to speak, and requires the highest degree of responsibility in expressing the views and making decisions. Among the positive elements are the maximum elaboration and precise thinking. It should be said that these qualities are developed to a lesser extent in pure science and are more common in creative practice.

I completely agree that a modern leader should have his own political style. It is much easier to have the same style like everybody does, since it requires less risk. But I think that perestroika will continue to forge ahead more successfully if it relies on the leaders who preserve their individuality, while pursuing the common cause. Not for the sake of individuality per se, but in order to move perestroika ahead.

[Question] You started your career as a worker. How did it help your future work?

[Senchagov] Many of my coevals started their working lives with exploring things, defining their credos, testing their power. I myself chose the easiest and the most difficult job of a construction worker. This allowed me to learn all the complexities of real life, required hard work, mastering skills and gaining experience. This may be the reason why it is clear to me that perestroika can be successful when different social strata - and most importantly, the workers, peasants and intellectuals as well as young people and the elder generation - show consensus.

SEROV, Valeriy Mikhaylovich**Chairman of the State Construction Committee**

[Text] Born in 1940, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Institute of Civil Engineering imeni V. V. Kuibyshev with a degree in civil engineering. Member of the CPSU. Started out as an assembly administration foreman in the USSR Minmontazhstroy; advanced to become First Deputy Director of Glavmosstroy over 20 years of work. Head of the department for construction and construction industry at the USSR Gosplan since 1983, then Deputy Chairman of Gosplan.

[Question] Valeriy Mikhaylovich, you have inherited an industry with chronic ailments. People react to incomplete and long overdue projects, and low quality of construction work as to a fatal inevitability. Do you see a way out of this dead end?

[Serov] I agree that the industry's critical condition is obvious today. I think it can be only compared to the situation in the country's agriculture. All the contradictions and woes of our economy are in sharp focus in both of them. The problems have piled up for decades, and the recent remedial measures fell short of expectations. Moreover, the efficiency of capital investments in construction has even declined.

Has the industry really reached a dead end? A thorough and sober analysis proves that there is a way out. But it cannot be found by taking piecemeal, local, quick fix or ad hoc measures, or rather half-measures that we used to take in the past. We need cardinal solutions, radically new approaches and efforts going well beyond the construction complex, essentially associated with sweeping changes in economic management of the country.

To begin with, we should overhaul our investment policies, starting with curtailing the scope and reducing the volume of incomplete projects, suspending the construction of everything prone to hit long delays from 1990 onwards. We are taking the stock of such projects. The USSR Gosstroy submitted proposals to the USSR Council of Ministers on freezing the construction of many of them. Specifically? They include the trans Caucasus railroad, the Far Eastern chemical works, the Belaya Zima mining and metallurgical plant.

To put the Gosstroy's program of action in a capsule, I would outline the following directions: to refuse free centralized capital investments (starting from the next year), supplanting them with bank loans (with adjustable rates, of course); introduce cost-accounting in construction and determine construction workers' profits from finished products; clearly delineate the rights and duties for implementing investment policies between the center and the republics, local bodies of government; increase the energy intensity of work through use of effective technologies, building materials and structures.

The tasks are immense, as you can see. To handle them, Gosstroy should become industry's scientific and technical

headquarters, resolutely shed routine work and the functions of operations production.

[Question] More and more doubts are raised about the feasibility of meeting the country's targets in housing construction, its major social program. What do you think should be done to meet them for sure?

[Serov] Housing 2000 is Gosstroy's special concern, although I think it would be more correct to look at it as a national program, which is to be handled by the whole country. I believe that all the ministries and agencies, enterprises and regions should assume responsibility for fulfilling the plans everywhere without fail. It is obvious today that the center can outline only main guidelines of the country's housing program, while specific decisions should be adopted locally. How can it be otherwise if some regions have a quota of 20 square meters per person and in others it is under 9 meters, and construction volume has to be increased four to five-fold in some areas?

But I am convinced that the Housing program is not limited to the number of square meters turned over to occupancy. It means creating the best possible human habitat, taking into account the national traditions and cultures of different peoples, climatic zones, landscapes, and so on. I think that everybody resents the drab look of our standard towns and settlements, their lack of amenities and the monotonous skyline. That is the reason why Gosstroy deems it necessary to restore the prestige of an architect as an ideologue of the town building process. The entire system of design and cost estimates should be radically overhauled, and project designers should be provided with computers. It is impossible to achieve high quality of projects without this, nor to cut down on the development schedules. Project bids should become routine too.

One more consideration. We all should abandon the idea as soon as possible that any person, even untrained, can work in construction. Life itself dictates the need to restore a builder's prestige and professional skills and to create the best possible work and everyday conditions for him. Only then shall we be able to deal with the "fatal" problem of quality, shall punctually meet the deadlines and make people happy with new housing.

SHCHADOV, Mikhail Ivanovich**Minister of the Coal Industry**

[Text] Born in 1927, Russian. Graduated from the Higher Engineering Course at the Tomsk Polytechnical Institute, the all-Union Financial and Economics Institute Through Continuing Education and the Higher Party School under the CPSU Central Comdex. A mining engineer and an economist by training. Started his working life as a collective farmer. Then worked at the Sakhalin and Irkutsk mines. Performed Party work. Headed the East Siberian coal production association, was USSR Deputy Minister of Coal Industry. Appointed Minister in 1985. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Mikhail Ivanovich, the coal industry was believed to have no future one time, to have said its last word...

[Shchadov] You are right. But we are going through a coal "renaissance" now, returning to Lenin's definition of coal as "industry's bread." Coal is to play the role of a buffer fuel providing the required power supply until we develop new efficient energy sources to full extent.

This sets top goals for our Ministry in giving priority to open-cast mining, the development of Eastern deposits, increasing the output of up-to-date mining equipment increasing labor efficiency. Greater attention is paid to environmental protection at the same time. Industry scientists are working on such open-cast mining methods that will allow us to reduce land alienation two to three times. We widely introduce the method of accelerated soil formation with the help of biological substances. Today 11 associations in the industry recultivate more soil than they upturn, and the number of such enterprises is growing...

Air purification is another set of problems. We handle them together with foreign experts, including those from Denmark and Hungary. An Institute dealing exclusively with environmental protection has been established in the industry.

We also set the goals which seem to go beyond the industry's scope, including the introduction of effective and economically profitable, pollution-free uses of coal. These include its liquidifying and coal gasification in the "boiling layer". We put great hopes on burning hydro coal suspension. We are not indifferent as to how coalminers' results of work are used.

[Question] The coal industry is known to be subsidized. Can it become profitable? Is this the question of prices or of scientific and technical progress?

[Shchadov] The mechanism of losses required sacrifices from the coal industry above all. It was profitable only during 13 years of Soviet rule. Now this is the only industry of planned losses. Losses over a long period of time affected the technical standards. So, the issues are interrelated.

We estimate that wholesale prices have to go up 2.3-2.5 times in the 13th five-year plan period in order to make it profitable, without which its technical upgrading is not feasible. But it has been decided to increase them only by 1.9 times starting from 1990. Subsidies will be required again during the second year of its operation at this price level. Thus, our economic accountability will be rather relative.

The industry can turn profitable over a long period of time only when large-scale measures of scientific and technical progress are implemented. Using the most important of them, we plan to increase labor efficiency by 10-12 percent in the 13th plan period. In this way we can improve things considerably in the social sphere as well.

SHCHERBAKOV, Vladimir Ivanovich

Chairman of the State Committee for Labor and Social Problems

[Text] Born in 1949, Russian. Graduated from the Toliatti Polytechnical Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. Doctor of Economics. Member of the CPSU. Worked as an engineer, dispatcher at the Volga auto plant of the USSR Ministry Automobile Industry. Performed Komsomol work for a few years at the VLKSM Gorkom in the city of Toliatti. Then again worked at VAZ and then as deputy general manager for economics and planning of the Kama truck plant, department head of the USSR State Committee for Labor. First Deputy Head of the Administration of the Affairs of the USSR Council of Ministers.

[Question] The Committee you head is called upon to handle the problems concerning virtually all segments of the population. It plays a key role in implementing a strong social policy. What are you planning to do, where to start from?

[Shcherbakov] It is true that the USSR Goskomtrud plays a special function of formulating nationwide approaches to dealing with such vital issues, affecting everybody, as the management of labor, wages and social security. This is where the interests of the state and the individual, the enterprise and the region intersect. Quite a number of pressing problems have surfaced in these areas. They define our program of action, set priorities and make us look for solutions.

The economy's social re-orientation requires that the Goskomtrud focuses on the issues reflected in the second half of our name, since social problems increasingly emerge in the foreground, demand greater attention and effort from the Committee workers.

[Question] Now another question. You worked within the system of this committee before and know the situation and the people there as an insider. What would you choose to do - improve on the established style of work or abandon it completely?

[Shcherbakov] Like everywhere else in the USSR, the Goskomtrud has undertaken measures in the past few years to change its structure, define its functions more precisely, and improve on the style and methods of work. I was involved in this work myself as a member of the Committee Collegium.

But I took a different view of many aspects of the USSR Goskomtrud's work after I had worked in the apparatus of the USSR Council of Ministers and especially after the Congress of People's Deputies. I can see that further improvement is required in some lines of work, but a radical overhaul of the established work approaches and stereotypes is necessary in other directions, especially those involving a faster re-orientation towards social issues.

[Question] Many issues handled by Goskomtrud will be dealt with locally more and more - in the republics,

territories and oblasts. What style and principles will be practiced in relationship with regions in this connection?

[Shcherbakov] They will be mostly governed by the provisions of the Law on local self-government, which I hope will be passed soon. Under these conditions, the USSR Goskomtrud and its organs should render practical help in popularizing advanced experience, formulation of unified approaches, methods and recommendations. It is up to the republics themselves to decide whether they want to use them or not.

In a word, we should try to operate in such a way that all the requests submitted by the republics, territories and oblasts be given high attention and the decisions meet the interests of the regions and the state as a whole.

[Question] You are the youngest member of the government. Which qualities do you think put you in such a high orbit? What do you think about your appointment? How do you see an ideal statesman and manager?

[Shcherbakov] This is perhaps the toughest question. I cannot judge my own qualities. The only thing I can say about myself is that I never sought to duck decisions and responsibility and always took a stand.

As to the ideal statesman and manager, I think we had the most striking personalities in the early Soviet years, when a statesman of a new type was molded under V.I. Lenin's direct influence and example. We are living through the times reminiscent of that period to a certain extent. I think this is one of the reasons behind the promotion of new cadres.

SHEVARDNADZE, Eduard Amvrosiyevich

Minister of Foreign Affairs

[Text] Born in 1929, Georgian. Graduated from the Kutaisi Teachers' Training College with a degree in history. Performed Komsomol and Party work as First Secretary of the Kutaisi Gorkom of the Georgian LKSM, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Georgian LKSM, First Secretary of the Mtskhety and Pervomaiyskiy Raykoms of the Georgian CP, head of the Tbilisi City Party organization. Held the job of the Minister of Public Order Protection and then Georgia's Minister of Internal Affairs from 1965 to 1972. First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia from 1972 to 1985. USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs since 1985. Member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Eduard Amvrosiyevich, you are probably the only Minister who faced an easy debate in the committees and at the session of the Supreme Soviet. They emphasized the successes scored by Soviet foreign policy, the good results following the restructuring in the MFA, renovation of its personnel and emergence of new methods of work. How did you manage to grasp a huge load of information in this field of work new for you, wade your way through all the subtleties of this "MFA mechanism" and enrich this area with new ideas and approaches?

[Shevardnadze] I'm sorry but I cannot agree that the approval of my candidature by the new USSR Supreme Soviet was easy for me. This is not just a formality when you have to report to the supreme organ of the people's power - for the first time in political practice - present to it a platform of the country's main foreign policy body and be tested by a genuinely democratic procedure. This is the beginning of a new relationship between the supreme power and the executive body, a landmark of new quality both in my personal and in the ministry's work.

I cannot say that I'm satisfied by how things are shaping up for myself and my colleagues. We face quite a few problems and unresolved issues, and deal with many shortcomings. Therefore, you should appreciate my mood when I went to the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet which was to discuss the candidature of the USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs. The fact that I won unanimous approval can be attributed to the unanimous approval of our country's foreign policy, formulated and implemented by its top leadership.

Incidentally, although the discussion at the committee for foreign affairs at the Supreme Soviet was positive in tone, quite a few suggestions and critical remarks were voiced which we shall take account of in our work by all means.

The USSR MFA intends to promote the most close cooperation with all committees and commissions of the Supreme Soviet, with each Deputy. We have established a special unit to do this and formulated a plan. Working within the framework of a constitutionally plenipotentiary mechanism, we would be able to expand the foundations of shaping Soviet foreign policy considerably, make this policy follow the people's will, consolidate the foreign policy base of perestroika, and reduce the mistakes and omissions to the minimum.

As to my "plunging" into the job of a Foreign Minister, I followed the rule tested and learned during my Party work - work as hard as you need to get to the heart of the matter. In practical terms, these were 16-hour working days without days off in the first 18-24 months after nomination, communication with as a large number of professionals as possible. The main thing was to get a clear understanding of priorities in the foreign policy concept and direction laid down by the country's leadership. It is easier to move forward when you know where you are going. The more so when next to you are well-wishing and competent colleagues supporting you with their high skills. As one of my main jobs, I tried to get them infatuated by the innovative nature and large scale of tasks. I think I succeeded in this. You should add much more frequent exchanges of visits, meetings with foreign colleagues, ace diplomats for the most part. This is an outstanding school, too, for an indifferent practitioner.

My coming to the MFA coincided with the beginning of perestroika. It imparted a tremendous intellectual momentum to foreign policy which released to achieve use an impressive creative potential concentrated in the building in Smolenskaya square [MFA headquarters-translator].

We are not resting on laurels of course. The restructuring of foreign policy and diplomacy is an ongoing process, including for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

[Question] During your tenure as First Secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia you also looked for new forms of work. Interesting social and economic experiments were under way in the Republic at that time. For example, the Poti experiment was, in today's terms, a step towards establishing a genuine local self-rule. It turns out that you felt the need to look for the ways to solve these problems even then. What do you think about the current controversy regarding the problem of regional economic accountability? How do you size up the position of those who want to reduce the idea of regional economic accountability to autarky and who campaign for introducing regional currency, - all this given the world tendency towards integration, the EEC countries' movement towards a single market and the introduction of one currency?

[Shevardnadze] Many people felt the urgent need to look for new approaches in the years that we describe as stagnant today. Many people did not want to accept the things the way they were. This is well described in M.S. Gorbachev's book, "Perestroika and New Thinking" - the potential for changes was welling up in public consciousness. It is another matter that the administrative command structures put a brake on the implementation of those ideas till 1985. We felt the full measure of this when we tried to "push through" the Abash, Poti and other experiments that you mentioned...

We had to listen to absurd and not so innocent accusations, write explanation memos. We were lucky to have had Comrades who understood and supported us at that time.

I must say that the movers and shakers did not stay in the rut even during the stagnation years. They worked, they searched and they found. Many people are unwilling and unable even now, in what I think are ideal conditions for experiment. They attribute their present mistakes and failures to the past.

What is the better time to search and to try if not now? What is the better time to test various economic models and submit the best of them for nationwide approval.

The results of the Abash and Poti experiments percolated to all regions and cities in the Republic, in other words, formed the foundation of a new economic system and order.

The foundation for the Republic's economic accountability was being laid down in those years as well. We boldly introduced family contracting at that time. We leased plots of land, hayfields and farms in many regions.

Leasing was introduced in the cities as well. For example, transport pools leased buses and cabs to drivers. A family would make a lease of a restaurant and a plot of land to grow all the basic food that would find its way to a restaurant kitchen and restaurant tables. No "raids" of

state trade warehouses which are abused by some cooperative restaurants now, no excessive stretching of clients' purses...

All those experiments produced astonishing economic and consequently social and psychological results. Not only lessors and their clients but the state as well benefited from this. Speculation ebbed down, product procurements and sales improved. An uncontrolled export of citrus fruit from the Republic was virtually stopped. This was achieved through an overhaul of the procurement system and moving it closer to the producer. The same was done in dairy and meat livestock breeding. Thanks to the restructuring of that system, people in the rural areas became interested in having new relationship with collective and state farms.

We experienced a deep-seated problem of money circulation even in those years. We thought how to re-organize banking, savings and insurance institutions. I remember putting in two years into this job while preparing a special Plenum of the Georgian Communist Party's Central Committee.

It is too bad that we failed to complete many things.

Now about economic accountability. I think that both regional and republican economic accountability provide for establishing a wide network of cooperatives inside a republic or a region and beyond it. The objective is not to rupture the existing linkages, but on the contrary, to reinforce and develop them using the opportunities offered by integration to promote the economic progress of the republics and regions of the country.

You mentioned a single European market. The concept of a United Europe does not infringe on the sovereignty of states joining it. They remain what they are even with a more profound integration process; moreover, the sovereignty of states, economically stronger now, becomes more full-fledged due to this process.

Economic sovereignty of a union Republic is enshrined in the constitution. But it cannot be implemented practically unless we apply the most advanced forms of integration and cooperation within the framework of a single national economic system.

The idea of a regional and republican economic accountability was born as a counter-measure to unbridled diktat exercised by the central agencies. I can understand its authors, since I know from my own experience how difficult it is to run your own home when somebody else is bossing around, all-powerful and unaccommodating. You depend on somebody else all the time, constantly begging and cajoling...

The Poti experiment was born out of desperate attempts to eradicate this anomaly. What was good about the Poti model is that it combined harmoniously the interests of the territory and industries, those of the city and the republic, those of the republic and the Union.

No, we should search and experiment, with an objective of finding such a "balance of interests" under which regional economic accountability does not disrupt the unified economic system, but rather complement and strengthen it, doing the same to the republican economy as a result.

[Question] Eduard Amvrosiyevich, what do you think forms a statesman's political image? As an experienced Minister and a recognized diplomat, what would be your advice to those just starting to work in the government, have their first minister's portfolio?

[Shevardnadze] It is hard to give such advice, especially when you know very well that past experience is no guarantee against present mistakes. This capital withers away fast if one does not build it up every day.

It is difficult to say what form a statesman's political image. The easiest thing is to say that it includes words and action, their matching each other, competence and erudition, general and specialized skills. But it often happens in life that a person works to the bone, is dedicated to his job and knows it well - but has no popular support. Probably people should feel that he is aware of them while doing his job.

In people's minds, a statesman's political image is when his aspirations match theirs. Nothing is worse than a credibility gap that opens when people either do not know or do not understand their leader, or, which is the main thing, when he does not deliver goods. What is crucial here are glasnost and looking at people through a democratic viewfinder. And he should not turn a deaf ear to public opinion, nor should he kowtow to it, but act out of inner convictions.

And let the people pass judgment.

It would be easier to avoid mistakes in conditions of an open society, a law-governed state and genuinely democratic structures.

SHIMKO, Vladimir Ivanovich

Minister of the Radio Industry

[Text] Born in 1938, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Energy Institute with a degree in electrical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked at the enterprises of the electronics industry, conducted scientific research work. Worked in Party organizations as an instructor, head of the sector, deputy head of the defense department of the CPSU Central Committee, head of the social and economic department of the CPSU Central Committee. USSR Minister of Radio Industry in 1987 and 1988.

[Question] Vladimir Ivanovich, your biography has your work in production entwined with Party work. You climbed many steps both in production and in the Party apparatus. How did your experience in production help your Party work and how does your Party experience can help you in leading an important industry?

[Shimko] Work in production teaches one to think in concrete terms, an ability to make decisions, take bold and

risky steps. In radio electronics, where the period of "semi-decay" is very short, it makes you keep in shape all the time and not to fall behind in life.

Party work enriches a person to a different degree. It teaches the art of dealing with people, understand the relationship between tactics and strategy, differentiate between the crucial and trivial and, what is very important, an ability to listen to and understand what your interlocutor says. These two aspects of life have become closely entwined in my destiny. As a result of this, I learned about the most interesting directions in radio electronics and met many comrades who think alike.

[Question] A minister should be well versed in industry situation and uphold its interests in all manner on the one hand, and possess the capacity to raise above departmental interests and display statesmanship on the other. How can one achieve such harmony?

[Shimko] In a nutshell, it is too little and too dangerous to be just a good expert today. I think it was Show [Bernard] who said that one cannot be a specialist in a narrow sense without being an idiot in a broad sense.

Seriously, I should say that a new economic mechanism should pave the ground for a coincidence in the vectors of interests at all levels - state, industry, working collective, individual. It is the system that will do the work not calls to be conscientious.

I'm more concerned about dovetailing departmental approaches and territorial interests. We have piles of problems. People live in regions faced with many social and everyday concerns, while as industry leaders we often fail to pay due attention to their solution and expect people to display labor exploits at the same time. I'm convinced that the times when production and social issues were examined separately is a thing of the past and only a comprehensive approach will stimulate a higher production efficiency.

[Question] How do you see the role cast for radio electronics in the national economy today?

[Shimko] I would like to summarize the significance of radio electronics in one surmise. I think it increases society's intellectual potential and sets in motion practically new processes in science, production and economics. The information being spread tends to multiply itself (unlike material objects and energy which behave themselves strictly according to conservation laws).

Silicon microchip is the main symbol of today's progress, and therefore I'll refrain from talking about the need of giving top priority to the manufacture of electronic instruments.

I think that the scope of introducing electronic devices should be broadened. This work should become a must for all branches of the national economy without exception.

SHISHKIN, Oleg Nikolayevich

Minister of General Machine Building

[Text] Born in 1934, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Electrotechnical Institute of Communications with a degree in electrical engineering. Member of the CPSU. Worked in Komsomol and Party organizations, and R & D organizations. USSR Deputy Minister of General Machine-Building since 1981 and First Deputy Minister since 1988.

[Question] Oleg Nikolayevich, what has been hidden behind the Minobshchemash sign for many years? What tasks is the industry handling?

[Shishkin] We develop and build space missile technology. Our main job remains unchanged, i.e., preserve defense parity, provide for an asymmetric alternative to the SDI and prevent a militarization of outer space even with a 50 percent cutback in strategic weapons. This explains growing demands for the quality and reliability of space and missile complexes in whose building we are most directly involved. Today, two thirds of research and design work in the industry is devoted to the military needs. We shall reduce this direction down to 55 percent by 1995. The second half of the industry's potential will deal with nonmilitary items. The economic efficiency of space technology is rising here with each passing year. Space satellites are used in meteorology, communications, telecasting and navigation.

[Question] In addition to space, the industry has "earthly" concerns..

[Shishkin] True, the Minobshchemash is in charge of building equipment for the food industry. Under the program of building new types of machines, instruments and equipment, the industry should supply the processing branches with technology worth 4.1 billion rubles in 1988-1995, including over 700 types of new models and lines to the tune of 1.4 billion rubles. The ministry is the head body in charge of developing and building technology for bakeries, the confectionery, sugar, yeast, oil and fat, essential oil, meat and potato processing industries.

Take potato processing as just one example. We have been tasked to build a virtually new industry to make potato food products, boosting their output from 46,000 tons in 1989 to 500,000 in 1995. We have developed and are manufacturing equipment for making potato sticks and potato chips.

Production processes for over a dozen lines and facilities to make 12 types of potato products will be mastered this year at the "Dvina" base agro firm. This is a pilot facility which will be multiplied for future use at food plants.

[Question] Do you take into account an increase in requests from foreign partners for peaceful uses of space while developing your industry?

[Shishkin] The world space market has its specific aspects of course. It involved a high degree of risk first of all due to the complexity and uniqueness of projects. But it means a

great deal that state international organizations, television corporations and big private companies use our orbital technology ever more frequently. Over 160 countries are expected to enter the international space market by the year 2000, and deals worth hundred of billions of dollars will be made. It is our responsibility to take a worthy position in that market.

SHKABARDNYA, Mikhail Sergeyevich

Administrator of Affairs, Council of Ministers

[Text] Born in 1930, Russian. Graduated from the Novocherkassk Polytechnical Institute with a degree in electrical engineering. Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor. Worked as an engineer, lab manager, head of design bureau, and chief engineer at the enterprises under the USSR Ministry of Instruments. Worked in the apparatus of the Ministry for over 20 years, as deputy head of glavk, administration head, and Deputy Minister. USSR Minister of Instrument Making, Means of Automation and Management Systems since 1980. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Mikhail Sergeyevich, your work record is connected with the instrument-making industry. You devoted much of your effort to the USSR Ministry of Instrument-Making. Now the Ministry has been abolished. What is your reaction?

[Shkabardnya] I think that the fate of industrial ministries was sealed following the adoption of the Law on state enterprise. It was evident back in 1987 that a large number of them will be abolished and the remaining should overhaul their functions. Morally, we were prepared for the changes that are taking place now. The historical management methods are yielding their positions. I do not think there is an alternative to a new economic thinking or a new economic mechanism.

Speaking about the ministry of instrument-making, I would say that it is a relatively young industry - slightly over 20 years old. It enabled us to inaugurate a new advanced branch of machine-building, which will continue to develop regardless of whether the ministry is around or not. We can say that the industry's headquarters has fulfilled its mission to a large extent. It is important for the instrument-making industry, which is taking on new structures, to retain its scientific and technical potential while reorganization is under way.

[Question] What were your relations with the government apparatus while you were a minister? Did you have any conflicts? What do you think is required to improve the style of work?

[Shkabardnya] Many things happened during my 35 years in instrument-making. What I should say, though, is that as a Minister, discipline and respect towards amore senior leader were present all the time.

As to complex situations, I did encounter them. Personally, I always sought to be objective and marshal arguments to prove my point. I do not think that reasonable

and decent people should have conflicts. Although different points of view can occur, and experience and practice determine what is true in the final count.

It would be to bold to say that our apparatus has already assumed an optimum style of work. This is evident not just from the experience of enterprises and offices, ministries and agencies, but during the work of the first Congress of People's Deputies. In my view, the style of work of the apparatus reflects the general level of culture in society. As the living standards rise, cultural standards in society will also rise, and consequently the style of apparatus' work will improve at all levels.

The point is that in a law-governed state the functions performed by the apparatus and the executive bodies, the aims and goals facing them are governed by laws. This means that the entire work of the apparatus, its structure and organization should be geared towards the most efficient implementation of laws and the decisions made.

[Question] How can the government be shielded from petty and secondary problems which some ministries, agencies and Councils of Ministers of Union Republics sometimes try to pass up to a higher level?

[Shkabardnya] The so-called distributive automated control systems are used in running complex projects in technology. What is meant is that in case of deviation from the regulated regime, the decision is made as close to the object under control as possible. I think the same should be done in managing national economy which represents a very complicated management unit. As many as possible responsibilities should be delegated to enterprises, local and Republican Soviets, creating the required economic prerequisites which would stimulate the local authorities to assume these duties and bear the full degree of responsibility for their successful implementation. This is being done already, by the way, but in a very timid way. Unfortunately, economic scholars and sociologists have not come ahead with well thought-out concept of our society's economic development in modern conditions. We do not have a well-tested mechanism of transition to new economic management, we do not have a concept of socialist development in our country, and, if you will, do not have the optimum structure and model of economic management. If this is not done in the near future, the revived slogan, "All Power to the Soviets" will remain just a catchy phrase. Unfortunately, we are following the road of trial and error in many respects. To work well, people should have ideals and a clear understanding how to achieve them. All this still has to be formulated, and in the meantime we have to deal, along with major problems, with petty and secondary matters.

[Question] Mikhail Sergeyevich, you have been appointed to the position that was held by M.S. Smirnyukov for 25 years. How do plan to make up for his vast experience?

[Shkabardnya] I think that vast experience can be made up for only with vast experience. One can gain it only through patience, persistency, the desire to learn the job. M.S. Smirnyukov made a great contribution to the development

of the government apparatus, made it capable of work, attracted and trained professional personnel. We are greatly indebted to him for the school of life, humane attitude, kindness, his understanding of the far from easy life that the heads of ministries and agencies live, and his constant readiness to help in solving difficult questions.

[Question] The increasingly complicated and dynamic processes in society require a timely and in-depth social and economic analysis, which is impossible without the information media. Can your professional experience be helpful in transferring the government apparatus to the use of modern information technology? The Ministry of Instruments was known to both manufacture and use computers on a wide scale...

[Shkabardnya] In the present-day conditions, an apparatus at any level is unthinkable without the use of modern office equipment, computerized information systems, data bases, technical processing, and the facilities of data search and retrieval. The apparatus of the USSR Council of Ministers is working on using them. The Institute of Management Problems and the All-Union Research Institute of Automated Management in Non-Industrial Sphere - the leading organizations in this field - will soon become involved in this work. The transition to the use of modern information technology is to take place in a very short span of time. This task can be accomplished, the main thing to do is to get a profound understanding of information flows and to train personnel. That is where we are going to start from.

SILAYEV, Ivan Stepanovich

Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the Bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers for Machine Building

[Text] Born in 1930, Russian. Graduated from the Kazan Aviation Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. Worked at the Gorky aviation plant named after Sergo Ordzhnikidze, in the USSR Ministry of Aviation as deputy Minister, USSR Minister of Machine Tool and Instrument Building Industry, USSR Minister of Aviation Industry. Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the Bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers for Machine-Building since 1985. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Ivan Stepanovich, a new form of production management, intra-branch state associations (ISA), which stepped outside the ministry's jurisdiction, - for the first time in our country - emerged in the complex of which you are in charge. Who initiated such concerns? Do you intend to continue moving along this way?

[Silayev] It is true that these progressive forms of production management first emerged in our complex. I would like to stress from the outset that the idea was born in production collectives which saw a new structure of economic interaction as a good prospect for conducting an independent and efficient work along the principles of economic accountability and self-financing. To be more

specific, the "Elekrosila" association, headed by our well-known director, B. I. Fomin, pioneered the first Soviet concern.

The initiative was approved by the Leningrad Party Obkom and then won full support from the Bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers for Machine-Building. Organizationally, the ISA was set up in a short span of time. The apparent conclusion we may draw today is that Soviet concerns is one of the promising directions towards developing a new progressive structure of production management. It is only logical that the USSR Council of Ministers receives many similar proposals. The Bureau intends to actively facilitate their implementation. The ISA is not the only thing we have in mind. We shall resolutely encourage all new structural units reflecting multitude types of socialist property, and giving people back the lost feeling of being real owners of production.

[Question] All product consumers complain now about producer's monopoly. Scholars suggest different solutions to the problem, in particular downsizing certain enterprises, i.e., the creation of ever new organizational structures of production management. What do you think about this?

[Silayev] I think it is high time to critically re-evaluate the existing structures. Today, industrial giants dictate their will not just to consumers but to the collectives of structural units out of which they were born, depriving them of any independence in production and social development.

But is it possible to unravel such unwieldy conglomerates at the stroke of a pen? I think the initiative should come from the bottom, expressing the will of labor collectives. I can predict well ahead that the process will be extremely complex. Weak, technologically backward entities will not want to separate themselves, since they live off the common stock. It is not that easy to separate strong profitable units from the association either, because the entire pyramid they support may collapse.

I believe the first step should be as such: small specialized intra-branch units should be separated from major production associations. Operating along the principles laid down in the Law on state enterprise, they would be able to modernize their principal funds and start the output of "trademark" products, completing parts and units of a high technical standard not just for their "own" association, but for all those who need them.

[Question] Machine-building products account for an insignificant part of your exports. This is sad as it is. What people find depressing is that our products are worse and worse and more expensive than others' products. When are we to achieve world standards? What are your forecasts?

[Silayev] We machine-builders find it also depressing, even more so than other people. I cannot agree that all our products are much more expensive. Most of our machinery is less expensive. As to the technical standards and quality, machine-builders have to eliminate many serious shortcomings. Very often our products cannot compete on the world market.

I would not make the complex workers carry the full blame for the prevailing situation. Let me express one paradoxical idea. To be competitive, and to make oneself known on the market, one has first of all enter the market. And study its ups and downs and its demands for modern machinery in a practical way. And draw corresponding conclusions. Due to centralization, machine-building enterprises do not have such an opportunity since their entire output is distributed inside the country.

I see the solution in allowing our enterprises to export part of their products - from 5 to 20, and sometimes up to 30 percent. This will set off the process of enhancing technical standards, improving quality and winning international prestige.

SYCHEV, Valeriy Vasilyevich

Chairman of the State Committee for Quality Control and Standards

[Text] Born in 1939, Russian. Graduated from the Moscow Aviation Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor. Member of the CPSU. Started his working career at one of the defense enterprises, then conducted scientific work. His career ranged from lab manager to the general deputy manager of the "Vypel" production association. Deputy Chairman of the State Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers since 1987.

[Question] Valeriy Vasilyevich, before we had the USSR State Committee for Standards, now for Quality Control and Standards. What is the difference?

[Sychev] The difference of principle is that the Committee has been set the task of formulating and implementing state scientific and technical policy of controlling the quality of products. This is known to be our weak point. Therefore, we focus our work on increasing the competitiveness of goods and products, ensuring their high safety and ecological harmlessness and on cutting costs. The final objective is to provide the domestic market with only high-quality goods.

It is obvious today that the present standardization system is not attuned to the demands of restructuring the national economy. That is why the issue is not to eliminate individual shortcomings in the system, but to create such a structure with the functions that would speed up the movement towards that goal.

[Question] Standards are used as levers in upgrading technology in general. What are you planning to do to bridge the gap between us and the countries that entered an epoch of information technology?

[Sychev] I intend to work towards upgrading standards scientifically and technically. We should start with the standards of materials and completing equipment and then extend them to finished products. I suggest launching work to standardize technologies. This is a tested means of

ensuring stable product quality. It is also important to make the system of standards adopt international standards directly.

[Question] Which priority tasks are you to deal with in your job?

[Sychev] We shall try to defend consumer rights legally in the near future. In doing so, we shall rely on consumer societies which are being established in the country.

[Question] What do you think about the still controversial state acceptance?

[Sychev] I view it as an extraordinary measure for those producers who ignore the interests of the state and of the consumer. I personally believe that state acceptance will have no role in product quality control in the future. I have no doubt that enterprises and producers steadily turning out high-quality products will be relieved of it.

[Question] Was your previous work involved with quality problems?

[Sychev] Standards and metrology were one of the directions I was in charge of as Deputy Chairman of State Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers for the military industrial matters. Thus, product quality control problem is nothing new to me.

SYSTSOV, Apollon Sergeyevich

Minister of the USSR Aviation Industry

[Text] Born in 1929, Russian. Graduated from the Tashkent Polytechnical Institute with a degree in aircraft mechanical engineering. Started his working career at the enterprises of the Ministry of Aviation, where his jobs ranged from engine mechanic to the General Manager of the Ulyanovsk aviation industrial complex. Was First Deputy Minister of the USSR Aviation Industry over 4 years, and the Minister of this industry since 1985. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] The recent La Bourge air show has demonstrated once again a high level of Soviet aviation technology. But those were its individual models. How can one achieve a similarly high level for mass produced equipment, first of all for the civil aviation planes?

[Systsov] True, the 38th air show has proved that we have succeeded in raising our aircraft-building standards to the world level, especially in flight and technical characteristics, although we still lag behind somewhat in on board electronic equipment. I cannot accept the opinion that our civil airplanes are obsolete and considerably outperformed by foreign ones. The Soviet aviation fleet includes mostly Il-86, TU-154 and Yak-42. These are modern planes and we constantly work to improve them. We think they will remain in operation for another 20-30 years.

Usually Yak-40 is often given as an example of our lagging far behind the advanced countries. It should be borne in mind that it was designed 30 years ago. It was designed to have a high energy consumption to be able to take off from

unpaved runways. That is why its high kerosene consumption earned it the name of "gas guzzler." But the production of Yak-40s was ceased 11 years ago, and we do not produce it anymore.

New aviation technology for civil purposes is developed on the basis of achievements made in building military aircraft. We see our most important tasks in achieving fuel efficiency, providing for comforts, reliability and flight safety by using new on-board equipment and progressive technologies. We plan to increase the output of highly efficient and comfortable airliners by 2-3 times in the next two five-year periods.

[Question] The Ministry of Aviation has been commissioned to manufacture equipment for the light and food industries, agroprom and consumer goods. Doesn't it happen that a powerful scientific and technical potential accumulated over decades is being trifled away. Aren't we using cannons to shoot at sparrows?

[Systsov] I do not think we do. This is why. Any task that we are taking on and will take on in the civilian sphere, especially in aviation, is not easier than that in the military area. All of them require that we use both our scientific and technical achievements and the available experimental facilities, if we want to have well-made, quality, easy to use nice things, on par with the best Western models.

[Question] At what stage in your career did you feel capable of managing a big collective?

[Systsov] My road was not an easy one, I started as an engine mechanic. Then I had to learn the production of various planes, which involves not just engineering but organizational work as well. My career took its biggest turn when I was offered a promotion from a shop superintendent to the chief engineer at the Chkalov aviation plant in Tashkent. This was the turning point. My hobby is to build planes.

[Question] It means you are doomed to do the same job..?

[Systsov] Not at all. One is doomed who is forced to do things. There is no doom when work fills you with joy. I like my job very much, I keenly follow all world innovations and read a great deal. I think my infatuation has passed down to my family. My son graduated from the Moscow Aviation Institute and works as a leading engineer at the Mikoyan plant. My daughter is associated with the aviation industry, although she is an architect. It is too early to speak about the future of my four grandchildren.

TEREKH, Kondrat Zigmundovich

Minister of Trade

[Text] Born in 1935, Belorussian. Graduated from the V.V. Kuibyshev Belorussian Institute of National Economy with a degree in economics. Member of the CPSU. Started out as a village store bookkeeper, then worked as director of the city food and industrial goods sales administration, head of the sales administration of

the Minsk Oblispolkom. Chairman of the Board of the Belorussian Consumer Union since 1977. Nominated Deputy Chairman of the Belorussian Council of Ministers in 1984. USSR Minister of Trade since 1986.

[Question] Do you often shop as an ordinary patron and what "discoveries" do you make?

[Terekh] This happens very rarely. My working day starts when the stores just open and it ends sometimes when most of the stores are already closed. Like in the majority of families, it is my wife who takes care of running the house and she patronizes different stores.

This does not mean that I do not visit stores and public catering institutions. When on a business trip, I first inquire about how patrons are served. This gives me rich food for thought and for action.

[Question] To what degree do you think trade people are responsible themselves for severe shortages?

[Terekh] Shortages are perhaps the most burning problem today. One can hear people saying sometimes that mostly trade people are responsible for this, creating shortages on purpose. It would be wrong and unfair to say that this is true.

I cannot deny that trade abounds in shortcomings and problems. The market condition is affected by mistakes made in studying demand, shortcomings in commercial activities and a slow redistribution of goods, as well as some other factors. We have not eliminated instances when goods are hidden, put on hold or sold to a small group of people. We are waging a determined fight against such cases, enlisting the help of people's and worker's auditors and public representatives.

But the main causes of shortages are more complicated and varied. They have been produced by the deformations that took place in the economic and social development of the entire economy. The main problem is that the commodity market is not at an equilibrium with the population's monetary incomes.

Vigorous measures, first of all to saturate the market with consumer goods and foodstuffs, are known to be undertaken now to resolve this complex problem. The trade situation will improve as this is being accomplished.

[Question] What changes are to take place in ministerial functions when most of the questions are to be delegated down to the local level?

[Terekh] State trade has operated under new economic conditions for two years already. They demanded that we change the pattern of industry management, simplify the organizational structure and grant trade outlets and lower management units maximum independence. That is why a number of functions that the Ministry performed before have been passed down to the local level. This concerns, for example, the distribution of commodities between trade systems, city and rural areas. Work is continuing to

improve the economic mechanism of trade. The government is considering now the proposals made by the Ministry to further promote economic accountability and broaden the economic methods of managing the industry.

TOLSTYKH, Boris Leontyevich

Chairman of the State Committee for Computer Technology and Information Science

[Text] Born in 1936, Russian. Graduated from the Voronezh State University with a degree in physics. Doctor of Technical Sciences. Member of the CPSU. Started his working career as an engineer at the Voronezh semiconductor instruments enterprise, was its chief engineer and consequently, general manager of the "Elekronika" production association. Worked as Deputy Minister of the USSR Electronics Industry since 1986, and Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology since 1987.

[Question] Information science and computer technology are known to be the most important elements of scientific and technical progress all over the world. We have not made much of a breakthrough in this area yet. What do you think is the most important for solving this problem?

[Tolstikh] We face a critical situation as far as information science goes. We have done quite a lot in the past few years to bridge the perennial gap with advanced foreign countries.

This involves the building of new types of computers of different classes, boosting their mass production, especially the manufacture of personal computers, the most widespread, which are to play a leading role in solving the problems of introducing information systems.

Work is drawing to an end on the optimum version of the concept of information science in Soviet society which will provide the basis for formulating a national and regional programs. The solution of the problems covered by it is a major objective set before the committee and other ministries and agencies.

Information and new information technologies are becoming a strategic source of societal development, and therefore, the still untapped resource of perestroika. The market is already being saturated with personal computers. But this is not information science yet, just one of the most important, though not the only component of its material base. A drastically more efficient use of computers by all types of users, defining their needs for data and providing access to it is the second aspect of the problem, not less important. Satisfaction of "information hunger," so to speak. And this is impossible without setting up as early as possible a statewide data network, data bases, information and computer networks and systems on the national scale.

[Question] Computers are manufactured in our country by enterprises of different ministries and their development is handled by academic and industry institutions. What

levers does your committee possess to unite the efforts of different agencies, secure their efficient influence both on production and science?

[Tolstikh] Our only levers today are control and coordination functions laid down in the committee statutes. Other means of influence are very few. Even the existing ones do not perform well under the conditions of a radical economic reform.

I believe the Committee should organize work to solve major and most important problems of information science, in which all organs of supreme power, state administration, national economic complexes and regions have a stake of course. To achieve these goals, we need financial levers first of all, including respective capital investments and allocations of foreign currency.

Among other spheres of influence is the integration of efforts by the committee and the regional governing bodies in dealing with the issues of information science, organization of patent work and licensing on a number of information means and systems, and so on.

The Committee is an organ of state management designed to organize the entire complex information mechanism and facilitate an early introduction of new information technologies. It should make their use effective, train computer and information science experts in larger than average numbers, teach skills to computer users, the public and prepare the entire society for the inevitable information science of different aspects of human endeavor.

VELICHKO, Vladimir Makarovich

Minister of Heavy Machine Building

[Text] Born in 1937, Russian. Graduated from the Leningrad Military Mechanical Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. CPSU member. His career at the Bolshevik plant in Leningrad spanned from sddodysmy superintendent to director. First Deputy Minister in 1975 and the USSR Minister of Power Engineering Machine-Building since 1983. USSR Minister of Heavy, Power Engineering and Transport Machine-Building since 1987.

[Question] Vladimir Makarovich, a heavy burden had been placed on your shoulders. You became the head of two associations - the Ministry of Heavy Machine Building and the Ministry of Power Engineering Machine Building - merged into one Ministry a year and a half ago. Now two more have been added - the Ministry of Chemical Machine Building and the Ministry of Road Construction Machine Building. So, a total of four. I feel somewhat reluctant to ask you "heavy" questions in our first interview...

[Velichko] I cannot say that heavy machine-building is "heavier" [more difficult] than other industries. I think everybody has a heavy burden. I would say that our Ministry's output is just "heavy". But this is another matter.

[Question] Are we witnessing the birth of another super Ministry, like the Gosagroprom which passed in oblivion?

[Velichko] I do not think we have reasons to look at it that way. This is not a mechanical addition. National economy does not need an artificial conglomerate. As a Minister, I see my goal in building such a functional structure that would allow the industry to make an efficient and dynamic process. Within this structure, the Ministry will have clearly-defined functions. Its apparatus will be downsized considerably.

[Question] Does it mean that the Ministry will handle primarily strategic issues?

[Velichko] Yes, it does. These will include scientific and technical progress and the related investment policies, upgrading economic management methods and finally social policies.

[Question] What do you pin most of your hopes on in implementing this program?

[Velichko] I count on the labor collectives. No genuine economic accountability will exist if it does not operate in the primary cell, such as a team, a section, or a shop... This is where economic accountability has to be introduced now, and all expenses have to be measured meticulously. We have not reached that point yet. We should test all economic accountability models and let an enterprise decide which are the most efficient for it. I believe that in the final count we should more vigorously establish lease enterprises having a mixture of the state and cooperative property of the means of production. The "Konveyor" association, working under a lease contract, has already set up a joint stock company.

[Question] What do you expect the Government of a new composition to accomplish?

[Velichko] I believe that it would be easier to work in the new government. Times have taught us a lot - to be more honest, demanding and democratic. It is crucial for us to act professionally and in concert, without reducing ourselves to mutual recriminations, and to espouse comradeship. We should discern the Party's economic and social policies behind an industry specific problem.

[Question] Vladimir Makarovich, has the merging of Ministries affected your salary?

[Velichko] I draw the same 800 rubles a month as my colleagues do. I never thought whether this was too much or too little. Nor have I thought that a greater workload should affect my salary. You would agree that none of us works for salary's sake alone.

[Question] What is your life like outside of work, in your family?

[Velichko] I have wife, a daughter and a grandson. I work Saturdays and like all Ministers often part of Sunday too. I have time only for strolls. I used to play volley-ball, but this passed away somehow. I was able to read a lot before, both magazines and books. I go to the theater, but not too often. I liked ballet most of all when I lived in Leningrad. It is not that I just loved it, I studied it almost as a

professional. I had many friends among Leningrad artists, and I have some now too. I have some among Moscow artists, but not too many.

[Question] Is it tough to be a Minister?

[Velichko] To be honest, I never felt like a Minister, I do not have a "minister's syndrome." This may be bad, I do not know. Because I lack it, it does not mean that I'm less demanding towards myself and other people. Work is work...

VOLKOV, Aleksandr Nikitovich

Minister of Civil Aviation

[Text] Born in 1929, Russian. Graduated from Yu. A. Gagarin Air Force Academy and the Military Academy of the General Headquarters. Member of the CPSU. Worked in aircraft units of the Central Asian, Belorussian and Moscow military districts. Was commander of the military transport aviation, deputy commander of the USSR Air Force. Minister of Civil Aviation of the USSR since 1987.

[Question] Aleksandr Nikitovich, how do you describe the main elements of your program?

[Volkov] Here's some statistics. Last year civil aviation carried 125 million passengers, an all-time high for us so far. This is six million more than in 1987. Note, however, that this is 15 million less than was required. Why do we fail to meet the demand? First of all because of fuel shortages. Our number one goal is to eliminate that bottleneck.

We do not have to start from scratch there. Last year, we carried additionally over one million passengers using saved fuel. We straightened out some routes (we do not bypass closed areas with the consent of the military), use short-cuts for approach landing, chose the most advantageous flight echelons and the most economical engine operations. But more radical changes are required so that we can move ahead.

For example, such as transferring more and more of not urgent cargo to the land transport. The latter should be converted to gas fuel more and more. According to the estimates, the conversion of just 10 percent of this transport will enable industry to produce additionally five million tons of fuel for us, significantly more than we save in one year. Aviation itself should not rule out the use of gaseous fuel. Real projects are under way already. One of the ways of saving fuel is to increase the percentage of fuel-efficient planes, such as Il-86, TU-154M and Yak-42. Unfortunately, these economical machines carry only 19 percent of all passengers.

I could prove the rationale behind some other directions in our program in the same way, such as the elimination of disproportions in the development of ground material and technical facilities at the airports (it is designed to service 80 thousand passengers an hour, while twice as much is required), the replacement of the pool of aircraft and

helicopters (an average wear of machines now is 60 percent), and many other things.

[Question] They talk about establishing another organization as an alternative to Aeroflot. What is your attitude to this?

[Volkov] In our desire to fight monopolism, we confuse the cause and the consequence all the time. Is an alternative organization going to fill aircraft fuel tanks with kerosene or with holy spirit? Does it have better possibilities to reduce overhead and keep airfare at the affordable to the passenger? Or do you intend to give it profitable routes, while economically unprofitable but socially important ones assign to the same "monopolist", Aeroflot?

[Question] But you would not deny the existence of "air bosses" in your system, who dictate to the passengers and cargo dispatchers their own conditions. Isn't this a manifestation of monopolism?

[Volkov] You think that an alternative organization will rule out such occurrences for good? What you have in mind is not just another fur hat making factory, in addition to the existing one, but about one more system that would perform all the tasks at least at Aeroflot's minimum level - from the safety of flights to economical transportation. Wouldn't be a better solution to set up self-financing aviation enterprises on the basis of existing territorial directorates which would be able to compete in servicing passengers and cargo dispatchers? We have such aviation companies and associations in mind when overhauling the general scheme of civil aviation management. This fits into the state concept of introducing innovations in managing the economy and social sphere in the republics and regions. In doing this, I think that we should keep one single center in charge of such questions as scientific and technical development, flight safety, airliner and equipment certification, and some others.

VOLMER, Yuriy Mikhaylovich

USSR Minister of the Maritime Fleet

[Text] Born in 1933, Russian. Graduated from the Far Eastern Higher Engineering Marine School and the Academy of National Economy under the USSR Council of Ministers. Engineer ship navigator by training. Member of the CPSU. Started work in merchant marine as a captain aid on the ships of the Far Eastern marine steam ship line, then was captain of the Araks tanker, later worked in personnel management. Was at the head of the Maritime and Far Eastern marine-steam ship lines. Has occupied ministerial position since 1985.

[Question] Yuriy Mikhaylovich, your entire life is connected with the sea. Obviously, the profession influenced your principles in life. Does the Minister retain something of a "sea wolf" in his soul?

[Volmer] A "sea wolf" for me is not just a romantic hero, but a seasoned and experienced sailor, for whom the sea is not a poetic symbol but a place of work. It is not an easy

job, the one constantly requiring physical effort and psychological tension, and high professional skills.

I worked with many people at sea, whose work and life credo can serve as an example. I owe them a great deal for the lessons I learned and for the brotherhood. I remember my first captain who passed down many of his professional skills to me. A sailor's service steels one's spirit, tests endurance and encourages comradeship till the end of one's life. Till the end of one's life, that's it.

[Question] The efficiency of operation for our fleet is judged, along with other indicators, by the amount of hard currency earned. Are there any reserves to boost it?

[Volmer] The country earns a net foreign currency profit of over two billion rubles a year shipping the goods for Soviet foreign trade and foreign freight operators. At the same time, we have to spend almost half a million rubles in hard currency to charter foreign tonnage.

Why is there this paradox? It is explained by the most urgent need for fleet modernization, whose intensive obsolescence has been caused by its insufficient replenishment over many years. Judge for yourself: an average life of ships in the world is 12.4 years, while ours is 15 years. Over one quarter of them have been at sea over 20 years. Fleet modernization is possible only if the industry is switched over to self-financing, including the one in foreign currency.

I think we would be able to solve this problem if we go ahead and consolidate and promote the restructuring of merchant marine management which set off in the past few years.

VORONIN, Lev Alekseyevich

First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers

[Text] Born in 1928, Russian. Graduated from the Urals Polytechnic named after S. M. Kirov with a degree in mechanical engineering. Worked as a superintendent, section chief, chief engineer, manager at defense enterprises. Was Head of Ministry, Deputy, First Deputy Minister of the USSR Defense Industry, then First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Gosplan. Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers since 1985, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Material and Technical Supplies. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Lev Alekseyevich, the position of First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers for general matters, in which you have been confirmed, has been instituted for the first time. Why was it done? Which questions are you to deal with first of all?

[Voronin] This position has been established due to the need to be able to solve the current issues within the competence of the USSR Government in a more comprehensive and prompt manner. I refer to the problems that emerge in the course of implementing the State plan and which go beyond the competence of the standing bodies of

the USSR Council of Ministers and the governments of individual Union Republics as well as the core issues of national importance. I would single out among them the need to speed up the production of nonfood and food consumer goods in which virtually all branches, Union Republics and regions are involved now. Joint efforts are planned to solve the task of technically retooling agroindustrial production in the shortest time possible. That is why I have been monitoring the pace of this work as First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers.

Besides, my duties include the examination by the USSR Council of Ministers of the work related to the USSR Ministry of Railways, the USSR Ministry of Metallurgy and the USSR State Construction Committee, as well as the general questions of capital construction in the country.

Each of these directions is complicated as it is and requires a well-thought out position. I do have such a stand. If you take capital construction for example, those heading intra-branch economic complexes, the Ministries and the Councils of Ministers of the Union Republics engaged in construction should bear full responsibility for the results of investment activity, including the efficient use of capital investments, the state of uncompleted construction, meeting the deadlines of putting up and commissioning new capacities as well making them match the best world characteristics.

This should ensure a clear-cut division of the rights and responsibilities of all parties to the investment process. At the same time, to monitor the decontrol of this process, calls for a smooth and precise coordination in the matters of capital construction on the national level.

[Question] Many people regard Gossnab which you headed a bulwark of the administrative command system, with its rigidly centralized "rationing" and fund allocation and view it as a barrier against a radical economic reform. What do you think about this? What are you going to ask Gossnab to do as First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers?

[Voronin] I must say first of all that I'm all against such point of view. Gossnab cut down on the volume of its allocated products five-fold in the past two years. Out of it, almost 80 million rubles' worth of different materials, goods and equipment have been passed down to the manufacturing enterprises for free distribution (through direct unlimited orders by consumers and territorial supply organs). The number of orders centrally linking consumers and supplies has been reduced six times. As a result, the USSR Gossnab accounts now for slightly more than 15 percent of the products that are allocated in a centralized manner.

The entire problem cannot be reduced to the scrapping of fund allocation. We speak of a transition to a new type of economic relations among enterprises and creating real conditions under which a consumer can choose a supplier. It is at least naive to think that this can be done overnight,

given the presently highly monopolized production structure, price disbalance, huge payment surpluses at the disposal of enterprises. That is why the Gossnab worked out and is implementing a program of stage-by-stage promotion of wholesale trade towards eventually creating an all-Union market for the means of production.

Judging from experience, market formation and its effective regulation is far from an easy process. It is necessary therefore to promote the development of commodity and monetary relations among enterprises irrespective of their departmental affiliation and territorial location, radically and swiftly eliminate all barriers erected due to producers' monopoly, departmentalism and parochialism.

I can say that as part of my demands to the USSR Gossnab, this committee should pay special attention, in addition to promoting wholesale trade, to coordinating all work in the national economy towards resource-saving as the capstone for achieving economic recovery and its increased efficiency. We are known to spend one and a half times more materials, fuel and energy per unit of national income than the USA or Japan does. The losses in many types of output suffered during their transportation and storage considerably exceed their annual volume of growth.

What we need is a well-organized coordination on the national level, not just during the drawing up of plans and union programs, but during their implementation.

[Question] Work in production and in different chains of economic management provided enabled you to gain much experience as an organizer. How are you going to use it in your new job?

[Vorontsov] It would not be too original to say that a success in any undertaking depends on the ability to define the objective correctly, outline the real possibilities of meeting it and organize things around implementing it in a proper way.

Although the work to be accomplished by the First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers for general questions looks all too traditional, it is essentially new. This stems from the fact that current management has to be administered under principally new economic conditions. Reliance has to be made largely on the economic methods of management and on the legal mechanism.

I think the following measures have to be undertaken to accomplish this. First, we should set up a well-defined and effective system of immediate information allowing us to know the state of affairs in the national economy. We have the groundwork to establish such a system. What we need is to use it skillfully.

Second, state stockpiles and reserves should be kept at the appropriate level, including production capacities. This will enable us to turn out additional output in case of need and to promptly react to a changed situation without resorting to imports.

Third, it is very important to make the adopted decisions scientifically sound. What is meant is that several alternative solutions are looked into in each specific case and the most effective one is chosen.

And finally, it is essential to establish an effective monitoring of how the decisions made by the government are realized. The picture is far from being hunky-dory here. Take for example the question of implementing statewide programs of developing country's regions. The Congress of Deputies pointed out with good reason that often many of them remain unattended to.

I believe that to be able to do his job in a constructive manner, the First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers for general matters should constantly keep in personal touch with the respective committees and commissions of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Herein I see great opportunities for instilling the entire work in managing national economy with new content and giving it new momentum.

VORONTSOV, Nikolay Nikolayevich

Chairman of the State Committee for Protection of the Environment

[Text] Born in 1934, Russian. Graduated from Moscow State University imeni M.V. Lomonosov with a degree in biology and zoology. Doctor of Biological Sciences (1967), Professor (1972). Not a Party member. Held positions of a postgraduate student, junior research associate of the Leningrad Zoological Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences, senior lecturer at the Second Moscow State Medical Institute imeni N.I. Pirogov. Worked as a learned secretary at the Presidium of the Siberian branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences in charge of biological sciences, was member of the Presidium of the Far Eastern Scientific Center of the USSR Academy of Sciences, director of the Biological and Soil Institute of the Far Eastern Scientific Center of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Senior research associate since 1977 and chief research associate since 1988 at the Institute of Biology of Development imeni N.K. Koltsov at the USSR Academy of Sciences. Participant in, and leader of 41 scientific expeditions. People's Deputy of the USSR.

[Question] Nikolay Nikolayevich, when and why did you, a research worker, decide to get actively involved in politics? What parts of your electoral program won you a deputy's mandate?

[Vorontsov] Politics has never been foreign to me. Why? Science is inseparable from society and society is inseparable from politics. And I represent biology which throughout its history, to my deep regret, ran into politics. I had to fight against Lysenko actively since 1955, upholding genetics. Participation in that fight was a public and political activity since Lysenko was supported by the leaders at that time and because political accusations were thrown at geneticists too. I had to defend my position. I considered it my duty to write appeals to the newspaper

editors and to the government. I was among young students and supporters of N.V. Timofeyev-Resovskiy, and therefore many episodes in Daniil Granin's novel, "Bison", are recognizable for me and are associated with real recollections.

I conducted considerable research and public work in the past 13 years as Vice President of a scientific society of the USSR Academy of Sciences. It turned out that our society, among other 28, is nominating people's deputies. I never thought I would be honored with this. I myself suggested the nomination of A. Yablokov, a well known ecologist with whom I worked in the same Institute. Other candidates were suggested as well. All of a sudden, both Yablokov and I received strong support from our scientific society. I was absolutely unprepared for this. But then I recalled - it may seem strange to invoke the call of ancestors - that my father was a delegate to the third and sixth all-Russian Congresses of Soviets and a delegate to the 11th Party Congress. Unlike myself, a non-Party member, he was a Party member since May 1917, the fact of which I am very much proud. This helped me to decide to join the election struggle.

Which parts of my election program won me a deputy's mandate? The fact is that I had no program. Program is a very specific thing. It must contain promises. So much has been promised in our country, you know, that if we add them all... In a word, I did not think it was serious. I deliberately called my election document a platform. My platform was titled, "Variety and Stability". What did it mean? I said in that platform that both living and social systems have very much in common. There are many differences, of course, but many things are common.

You would agree that people want to live in a stable society, in a socially and ecologically stable environment. We biologists know very well that the most stable biological community is the one consisting of the most varied specimen. A tropical forest, for example, consists of tens of thousands of specimen. A tundra forest is the most unstable entity. It is extremely vulnerable and damage-prone because it has few specimens. A meadow with its variety of specimens is stable too. If we apply a single culture, it has to be fed fertilizer all the time and be protected with pest killers. In another word, a monoculture lives under conditions of being constantly whipped up, a kind of stress if you may. It cannot exist otherwise. It is unstable because it is a mono.

Social similarities stem from this... We have lived as a social monoculture for a long time. But both living and nature structures can exist only when they have direct ties and feedback. Not a top-to-bottom connection, but the one from bottom to top. We are restoring this feedback in our society now. Both the Congress of People's Deputies and the elections themselves are a direct restoration of feedback. This chain should become operative.

I am convinced one hundred percent that we need social variety, a variety of opinions, a variety of education, different types of schools. Our entire education is intended for what may be described as decathlonists. A person does

not reveal his deep talents, does not show much, but he is an excellent student on the average. But we need a variety of abilities and personalities.

Our country should preserve its ethnic and cultural distinctiveness as well. In my mind, this is most closely linked with a rational use of natural resources, since every ethnic culture has its own centuries-old traditions and links to the soil. A loss of ethnic distinctiveness results in a break of man's ties with nature. The current tragedy in Western Siberia is attributable not just to those rapaciously mining oil without consideration for natural conditions. To cap it all, a large number of people who moved to Siberia are not associated with the culture of using nature. This use of nature was practiced not only by the Khanty and Mansi, but by the indigenous Russians living in Siberia for three hundred years.

I can elaborate on this subject. But what I want to say is that the same systems approach can be applied both to nature and to society. This is not biologizing but an expression of the world's inner unity.

[Question] When the State Committee for Nature was established, people hoped that the ecological situation in the cities and regions will improve. But it did not achieve much headway. Why do you think it did not? What do you think should be done for nature protection to produce tangible results?

[Vorontsov] It is naive to think that environment can be improved within the eighteen months after the State Committee for Nature was established, the Committee which has not stood on its own feet yet. Moreover, I should say that we should not expect a radical turnaround in the next few years. A gradual process will take place.

Ecological problems should be dealt with expeditiously but no haste should be made. I do not think that the process of establishing the Committee's organs is far from complete. Our local organs have people, of course, unselfishly dedicated to environmental protection. We have such people not just among the ecologists, but among economic managers and public workers. But we should not overlook the fact that locally the State Committee for Nature employs few people having professional knowledge of environmental protection. In many instances, these were exclusively apparatus decisions - people were placed with our Ministry when one or another prominent personality needed a nice job.

I think that when I was offered to take charge of the State Committee for Nature, the leadership of the USSR Council of Ministers realized that they were getting a biologist not an experienced Minister. My job, therefore, is to rally in the Ministry, on the staff or nonstaff basis, the best scientific forces of the country to map out the strategy of nature conservation. The tactical objectives include organizing our own cartographical service, creating maps of ecological situation in the country and in the regions which should be given to each leader. Additional research and work over many years will be required to do this. But we are short of time. Nature can stand abuse no more.

[Question] What economic levers does the Committee need to perform its functions successfully?

[Vorontsov] A new economic concept of nature conservation should be formulated in order for it to produce tangible results. We shall make no breakthrough as long as we fail to set up and put into operation an economic mechanism that would make it economically unprofitable to harm nature. We should have effective economic levers in our hands. It should become unprofitable to pollute nature, unprofitable not just for a Ministry, but for a specific plant and a specific worker. We should create a system encouraging a solicitous use of resources and punishing unsolicitous use with the ruble. Obviously, we should have some progressive taxation - one scale for overuse of resources and the use of primitive technology and the other scale of rewarding financially for resource saving, for a speedy construction of purification facilities and for a mindful, i.e., ecologically balanced, use of nature.

[Question] What role should the State Committee for Nature play in managing the country's national economy?

[Vorontsov] Our Committee should act as an advisor when one or another decision is made which has ecological consequences. It should concentrate the functions of state ecological testing. Our goals are far from easy. Unlike other Ministries, we do not produce tons, do not plant over millions of hectares and so on. Even the Ministry of Health Service has a sort of a plan. We do not have any. Our functions are those of an executive body, on the one hand, as an organ of the USSR Council of Ministers. On the other hand, we perform the functions of control and administration which according to the Constitutions are those performed by the Soviets of People's Deputies. I think it is not accidental that the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR decided to put the Republican Committee for Nature under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Soviet. This issue was debated in other Republics. I do not think that all of us should follow the same road today. However, one should examine dual subordination of the State Committee for Nature - to the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers.

[Question] Informal ecological associations have emerged recently as a rather active force. How are you going to build your relations with them?

[Vorontsov] I cannot think about my work without establishing relations with them. But I must say that very different forces operate here. The overwhelming majority of these people show sincere concern for nature. We cannot but utilize their zeal even if we disagree on some issues. But some actions taken by the informal groups are caused by regional egotism, so to speak - I do not want it, let the neighbor have it... We should be guided not by emotions but by scientific data. We should formulate a concept of territory's ecological capacity and should prove through strictly scientific means how many enterprises a particular territory can accommodate without causing damage to nature and to people's health.

[Question] A deputy and a member of the government. You were in one capacity, and now you are in another. What do you think should be a relationship between a deputy and a minister?

[Vorontsov] It should be based only on cooperation. We have so wonderful people's deputies that I would draw many of them to work in nature conservation. I would use them for the good of the cause, since these people are not indifferent, concerned and whose help and advice I constantly need. On the other hand, I should be ready to be held responsible to the deputies for my work and for the work of the Committee.

YAGODIN, Gennadiy Alekseyevich

Chairman of the State Committee for Public Education

[Text] Born in 1927, Russian. Graduated from the D.M. Mendeleyev Chemical and Technological Institute with a degree in technical engineering. Doctor of Chemical Sciences, Professor. Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Worked in the Komsomol bodies upon graduation. Then worked at the Moscow Chemical Technological Institute for almost 30 years, where he advanced from an assistant professor to the Rector. USSR Minister of Higher and Specialized Secondary Education, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Public Education since 1985. Member of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Judging by the press, the education problems have moved to the background recently. Does it mean that they have been solved and that education needs no more reforms?

[Yagodin] Absolutely not! The number of problems did not decrease, it has rather increased. I mean the ethnic school for example. The "lull" in the press stems mostly from a traditional approach of raising hubbub before a Plenum or a Congress and calming down afterwards. It is less easy to understand silence during the session of the Congress of People's Deputies. Did someone put a chant on school representatives? The deputies seemed to wake up only when my candidature was up for a debate at the Supreme Soviet session - they talked about our ailments with concern and interest, in a constructive manner.

[Question] Do the adopted reforms work or not [and why not if they don't], and do the proclaimed principles of education restructuring do the job?

[Yagodin] Both yes and no. They work in the places where collectives of like-minded people have emerged. Our sociological studies have revealed though that almost half of the workers in public education have not adopted the spirit of reform, its humanistic and democratic message. About 40 percent of the teachers believe that all changes should be introduced from above [higher salary, directives on what to do and how to do it] or from below, which is even more surprising, from the students themselves who should become better students all of a sudden without a teacher's effort.

This psychological factor slows down perestroika. There are many other reasons, such as the material base, the residual principle, all ills afflicting the country in a word. Like a mirror, the school reflects the situation in society. But society has failed to grasp the crucial importance of education and has forgotten that one can have neither bread nor fortune without educated, moral and cultured people. It is essential that we change or root out, I would say, this short-sighted consumer psychology.

[Question] What are you planning to do to keep society aware of the future behind the everyday problems? Do you see ways of radically upgrading public education and the training of specialists?

[Yagodin] The school needs well educated teachers of a new type first of all - humanists, democrats and pedagogues in the highest sense of the word. It needs up-to-date programs and text books. The school needs normal working conditions, especially the rural school. Education needs attention and help on behalf of construction workers, other industries and the local organs of Soviet power. We hope that a law will be passed codifying the legal responsibilities borne by the material sphere towards education. We count on Deputies' support a great deal here. They can accomplish a lot. Look how fast and easy it was to solve the problem of recalling students from active duty in the Armed Forces.

[Question] What professional and personal traits are a must for a government member in your opinion?

[Yagodin] I think a member of the government is a person with a heightened civic duty and responsibility for the future of the Motherland and the people. An ability to listen to other people, to admit when your approach is wrong, restraint and work capacity are very important.

YAKOVLEV, Veniamin Fedorovich

Minister of Justice

[Text] Born in 1932, Russian. Graduated from the Sverdlovsk Law School with a degree in law science. Doctor of Law, Professor. Member of the CPSU. Started his career as a teacher, worked in the procurator's office. Came back to teach at the Sverdlovsk Law School after post-graduate studies, advancing from a senior teacher to a prorector. Director of the All-Union Research Institute of Soviet state building and legislation since 1987.

[Question] What first steps are you planning to take as a minister? Is your previous experience going to help you or hurt you?

[Yakovlev] There are quite a few problems. First of all, we need an immediate court reform, establishing genuinely independent courts. I think we should pass a law on the status of a judge, increase their salaries and provide the courts with everything necessary to administer law effectively. Then we should provide adequate legal services and law protection to individuals and organizations. It is clear that this should be achieved by improving the work of advocates, notaries and the entire legal service. We are

constantly concerned with the personnel of course, the standards of its training and re-training.

I think that my entire experience will turn out to be very handy in perfecting the legislative and law system where personal contacts with scholars, a specific understanding of their potential and possibilities is of considerable importance.

[Question] It is no secret that in the past the Ministry of Justice was "dropped" as being a leading state organ. What do you think should be done to give the Ministry the prestige it deserves.

[Yakovlev] The position of the Ministry of Justice precisely reflected the country's attitude to the law in the past. If we want to become a society of a law-based state, the entire system of justice inevitably moves to the forefront of political and social life. Our job is to promote this at a high professional level, to serve law in a dedicated and consistent manner and to seek its enforcement. I do not see any other ways of raising the prestige of legal organs.

[Question] How can the Ministry of Justice contribute to developing a law-governed state?

[Yakovlev] First, about the essence of a law-governed state. It implies control of society not through orders and commands from above, but through the laws passed democratically by the representative organs of power, reflecting the interests and the needs of society and its members. Such a state has clearly delineated functions between Party and state, legislative, administrative and court organs and has a highly humane and moral legislation. Finally, a law-governed state is impossible without a strict observation of law and order. Its capstone is justice, independent of anybody, based entirely on law. The Ministry of Justice should become one of the working bodies in charge of forming such a state.

[Question] What principles will underlie the relations between the Ministry of Justice and the respective organs of the Union and autonomous republics?

[Yakovlev] In a nutshell, the relationship is to be based on a clear-cut division of competence, close coordination and interaction. The ingrained stereotypes of customary centralization in handling the issues of public life interfere significantly with this. I think that new offbeat things put lawyers on guard, for example, when they familiarize themselves with a number of recent drafts and decisions passed by the Supreme Soviets and the Councils of Ministers of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian Union Republics. A calm and balanced examination helps to mitigate sometimes their rejection a priori, although those acts contain certain extremes. They are especially evident and sensitive in those instances when incorporating the elements of citizens' inequality. This is not only a source of conflicts, but runs counter to USSR's international obligations on human rights. Such situations should be eliminated, or prevented - which is even better - using a professional legal approach.

YAZOV, Dmitry Timofeyevich

Minister of Defense

[Text] Born in 1923, Russian. Graduated from the M.V. Frunze Military Academy and the Military Academy of the General Headquarters. Fought at the Volkhov and Leningrad fronts during the Great Patriotic War. Occupied various commanding and staff positions after the war. Commanded a central group of troops, the troops of the Central Asian, Far Eastern military districts, was Deputy Minister in charge of personnel. USSR Defense Minister since 1987. Candidate member to the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee.

[Question] Dmitry Timofeyevich, judging by the questions you were asked by the deputies of the USSR Supreme Soviet during your nomination and the letters received by the editors, today's questions connected with Armed Forces development are from the sidelines of public attention. Could you briefly describe which of these problems you regard as of prime importance?

[Yazov] It is difficult to categorize them by their importance and consequently to prioritize them. Like in any living organism, which we want to see healthy, the Army has no "secondary" body parts. In answering your first question, I would suggest another rationale, beginning from what defines our activities.

First, the question is how to implement the principle of reasonable sufficiency in military building and guarantee the country's reliable defense in conditions of a specific foreign political situation characterized by serious shifts towards disarmament and confidence building.

Secondly, being our people's organic part, our Army lives and develops, as Lenin used to say, in the spirit of general Soviet building, as far as the internal political situation is concerned. It is undergoing the same restructuring processes as society does. They are dialectically not simple in the specific conditions of military organization. They involve a more profound democratization, for example, along with strengthening one-man command and discipline, increase in the servicemen's social protection when intensifying troop readiness, maintaining required defense capability along with cutbacks in military spending...

These are just some of the problems that are to be solved to give the Armed Forces new quality.

[Question] The supreme political leadership formulates the country's defense and security policies. The Defense Minister should be obviously concerned with the interests of those who serve in the army. Many deputies made this point by the way when your nomination was discussed.

[Yazov] They made the right point. As a member of the Defense Council, I'm responsible for fulfilling its directives and I have to display firmness in upholding Army interests within that framework.

The Soviet armed forces are undergoing unilateral cut of 500 thousand people, half of which will be dismissed till the end of this year. The officers' corps will be reduced by

about 100 thousand. We shall have to apply much effort under these conditions to prevent the Army's combat potential from going down. We should do a great deal for those dismissed, so that they are taken good care of, provided with housing first of all.

[Question] The readers are interested to know what commanding positions the Minister occupied.

[Yazov] After graduation from the military school in 1942, at the age of 18 with a lieutenant's rank, I became a platoon commander at the Volkhov front. I must say that I did not skip ranks: I led a company for seven years, then a battalion regiment, a division and so on...My service "geography" embraced practically the entire country - North-West, the Trans-Baykal area, Trans-Caucasia, Central Asia, and the Far East. The life of a military man and his family is shaped by his job of defending Motherland. Do you remember Konstantin Simonov's "Not in paradise nor in hell, in the middle is soldier's spell."

YEFIMOV, Nikolay Ivanovich

Chairman of the State Committee for the Press

[Text] Born in 1932, Russian. Graduated from Moscow State University with a degree in journalism. Member of the CPSU. Worked in the press for over 30 years, was editor-in-chief of a number of APN publications, First Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper, Izvestia. Deputy head of the ideological department of the CPSU Central Committee since 1988 in charge of the production department of foreign political information and international ties.

[Question] You are a journalist both by training and by virtue of experience over many years. The State Committee for the Press requires somewhat different skills. Aren't you afraid of a new job? What do you feel and what ideas do you have starting your new job?

[Yefimov] I agree that the USSR State Committee for the Press is not a newspaper. The former Chairman of Goskomizdat, M. F. Nenashev, also a newspaper worker, told me that it took him almost a year to grasp the economics of book printing. I am to follow the same track. Fortunately, I do not have to start from scratch since my four years as Director of the APN publishing house did give me small, but some experience. Luckily, M. F. Nenashev has started many new things, building up reserves for the future.

I would be a lie to say that the new job does not scare me a bit. But I plunge into it with an ardent desire to work. This is my overriding feeling. I know that the industry boasts of quite a few talented and dedicated people. I've known some of them for a long time and I'm to meet many of them for the first time, which is always a joy.

[Question] How do you react to the book boom? Do you see the ways and means of saturating the market and making books accessible to broad readership?

[Yefimov] I react to the book boom the same way I respond to the magazine and newspaper explosions. Thank

God we have it all. I strongly disagree that the book boom is caused only by book shortages. People are reaching for their history, their heritage, spiritual treasure-houses as never before, because it is important for them "to grasp the essence of the days elapsed, and their causes, the very bottom and the roots, the core" [from a poem by Boris Pasternak].

What should be done today? First of all, we should reduce the use of newsprint for departmental purposes. This can result in saving up to 30 tons of paper - to a great benefit for the readers and at a profit for the budget - which can be used to print books in high demand, including children's books, fiction, reference and history works.

[Question] Most of the Goskomizdat's problems stem from the backward domestic printing facilities, paper shortages. The solution of these problems does not depend on Goskomizdat much. What are going to do to remedy the situation?

[Yefimov] The industry is in dire, very dire straights. Alas, we cannot work any miracles to make a breakthrough. One or even three years are not enough to eliminate the shortages of newsprint and printing equipment. No new printing presses can be put up overnight. But the book is needed today!

We should seek key decisions to rectify the situation. As far as newsprint output is concerned, such a decision was passed last year. No such decision has been made regarding the printing presses, but the draft has been prepared and I believe all the required signatures will be put under it in the most near future. I am convinced that the USSR Goskompechat should not stand aside. We should monitor both of these programs.

[Question] What traits do you think today's manager should possess, with whom you would like to work?

[Yefimov] I think three qualities define the character of any worker - competence, integrity in views and an ability (even courage if you will) to stick to one's point of view not only in front of the higher-ups but in front the colleagues. Naturally, these are not the only traits. It is implied that a person possessing all the qualities I mentioned should be

honest and free of the full value and inferiority syndromes. In his work, he is mostly stimulated by the interests of the job, and not personal mercenary interests or ambitions.

It is only too bad that I happened to come across this lickspittle attitude in some subordinates, this disparaging readiness to hang on the bosses' words. I appreciate those people who argue, defend their own approach to solving the problems, those who tell you that you are wrong and warn against making mistakes.

Another thing is that every staffer should have the right to make a mistake, the right to take chances. One's work should not look like a chain of mistakes of course, but people should feel that they are trusted.

And the last thing. It is important to combine youth and experience. In his "History of Russia From Ancient Times", S.M. Solovyov tells the story about an apanage prince who suffered setbacks all the time. The problem was, says the historian quoting the chronicle writer, that the prince surrounded himself only with young boyars [Russian noblemen] people of quick blood whose advice was fast but false. His retinue did not include mature men, wise in experience. I repeat myself saying that I appreciate a reasonable combination in all times. Our times is no exception.

Future Publication of Book Containing These Materials

[Text] The special issue of our paper in which we profiled the country's new government attracted much attention among our readers. Phones keep ringing in the editorial offices and letters keep coming urging us to publish the materials contained in the special issue as a separate book, creating a collective portrait of the government. Such a publication will be of interest for everyone, since it will tell the stories of careers, professional and personal traits of the representatives of the country's supreme executive organ of power.

We report to our readers that such a decision has been made. The editorial office is urgently preparing for publication the book you that you ordered. We hope that it will hit bookstores as early as October.

END OF

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